

THE
GLORY
O F
CHRIST

Set forth in several

SERMONS,
F R O M

JOHN III. 34, 35, 36. and V. 25.

A N D

*The necessity of Faith in order to please
sing G O D.*

F R O M

HEBREWS XI. 6.

By that able and faithful Servant of Jesus
Christ, Mr. *Thomas Allen*, late Pastor of a
Church in the City of *Norwich*.

*and sent to the Royal Society
by Martin Lister*
L O N D O N:

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TO THE R E A D E R.

IT being desired that more might be published of the Works of this Reverend Author, Mr. Thomas Allen; you have here some more Sermons taken from him in short-hand, which have been transcribed with care and diligence.

The main points of the Gospel are handled in these Sermons; so that those that Read them, may understand the Authors knowledg in the mystery of Christ. And they are delivered with plainness of speech, with words easie to be understood; so that it will easily appear, that his aim was to set forth Christ, and not to set forth himself in his Preaching. His speech and his preaching was plain, grave, solid, weighty and powerful, like an Ambassador of Christ.

These Sermons arise naturally from the texts of Scripture they are upon: for it

To the Reader.

was not the manner of this Author, to name a Text only for fashion sake.

One great cause of ignorance in the people, is, because there is no more direction in opening and applying the Scripture. The more Scripture is solidly opened, and practically applied in a Sermon, the better the Sermon is, whatsoever the injudicious and ignorant do think to the contrary. Indeed as I never heard any man Pray too long at a time, so I never heard any man Preach too long upon a Text. But as many, that seem to pray long, do oftentimes rather Discourse than Pray, and keep so little to the business of Prayer, that while they seem to Pray long, they Pray very little: So it is with some in Preaching, that though they name the same Text a great while; as if they Preached many Sermons from it, yet it may be, Preach not one, according to the direct scope and tendency of the words they are upon. I take notice of this, to commend the Author of these Sermons, as a pattern to young Preachers, not to think any part of the excellency of their Sermons to take but a few words for their Text, and to be long upon the same words; but to open and apply as much Scripture as they can at

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time, which will not only prevent many impertinences in Preaching: But when what is said ariseth immediately and naturally from the portion of Scripture handled, the people may take notice, that it is not so much the Minister, as God himself that speaks these things to them in his word.

These Sermons also are Orthodox, sound, according to the truth which is after godliness. We have lived in a time of an inundation of errors and heresies, and yet the Lord hath continued the truth of the Gospel in the Churches of the Saints. And although the Churches of the Congregational way have been looked upon by some as Seminaries of error; yet through the presence of Christ in the midst of them, the truth of the Gospel hath continued in them, as well as in other Churches of Christ, that differ from them in some points of order and discipline. Blessed be the Father of lights, that hath kept the guides and members both of Congregational Churches, and other reforming Churches, stable and steady in the main truths of the Gospel, which have been publickly owned and professed in the Land since the reformation: whereas many others have been carried away with diverse and strange Doctrines.

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To the Reader.

There seems to be a great conspiracy in these days, against the Lord Jesus as the Mediator between God and sinners. Men are studying how they may ascribe as little to Christ as may be, to whom we are to ascribe all, concerning the making atonement for our sins, and the bringing in an everlasting righteousness to justify us before God. Indeed Christ hath been so abundantly Preached amongst us, and many have such outward advantage by a profession of his name, that they cannot well openly renounce him; yet they are secretly undermining the very fundamental points of our Religion. Many amongst us slight what hath been generally taught concerning our fall in Adam, original sin, Christ's satisfaction for sin, and the imputation of his righteousness to them that believe on his name, and make a mock of being weary and heavy laden with the sense of the wrath of God due to us for sin, and looking to Jesus as the Mediator, and resting our weary Souls and perplexed Consciences upon him as our only Saviour. Now if these foundations be destroyed, if these main Doctrines be denied, we are really putting away the Lord Jesus from us, though we use never

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so many external Rites to make shew of honour to his name. Yea, it is considerable, That this opposition to the main points of our Religion, is fiercey maintained by persons greatly differing in other things: yet in this they agree, and are very earnest upon the matter to deny the Gospel. I speak of these things, to this end, to shew what great need there is of Preaching much of our fall in Adam, of the corruption of our nature, of the sentence of death, and condemnation that we are under for sin, of the person and offices of Christ the Mediator, of the necessity of knowing him, and fleeing for refuge unto him, as this Author hath excellently shewed in these Sermons, and so he did in all his Preaching. Indeed this Author was a son of thunder, and a son of consolation; he took all occasions from the Texts he Preached upon, to thunder out the wrath of God against sinners, to set them before Mount Sinai, and shew them the fiery Law, that they might be convinced of their lost and undone condition in themselves: and then endeavoured to bring them unto Mount Sion, and shew them Jesus the Mediator, and the blood of sprinkling, that taketh away sin. In his Preaching he shewed the people

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people the flaming Sword, the curse of the Law; shewed them that the avenger of blood was coming; and then told them of Christ as the City of refuge, and cryed to them to flee unto him: And indeed he is a right Preacher of the Gospel, that can thus change his voice, and readily turn his discourse upon all occasions. The blessing of Heaven go along with these Sermons, that they may be for the profit of many, that they may be saved.

Martin Finch.

The Glory of Christ set forth.

John III. 34, 35, 36.

For he whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him.

The father loveth the son, and hath given all things into his hand.

He that believeth on the son, hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not on the son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

IN these Words, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is described by a threefold adjunct.

1. From his *Authority* and mission from the Father, in those words, *He whom God hath sent.*
2. From his *Fidelity* in the discharge of that work he is employed in, in those words, *He speaketh the words of God.* As a faithful Messenger from a King will act according to his commission; so our Lord Jesus, who was faithful

2 *The Glory of Christ set forth.*

ful to him that appointed him, he speaks the Word of God, and nothing else but the Word of God.

3. Our Lord Jesus is described and set forth by his *Ability* and qualification for that work he was employed in ; this you have in those words, *For God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him.* The Spirit is given to Christ, as Mediator, without measure, or above measure.

He whom God hath sent ;] The word here translated sent, comes of the same word that *the Apostle* doth. Christ is the great Apostle, the great *Messenger of the Covenant*, whom all the Elect delight in, *Mal. 3. 1.* *The Apostle and high Priest of our profession*, *Heb. 3. 1.* *John the Baptist*, and the other Prophets, and so likewise the Apostles, they were Gods Ministers and Ambassadors ; but our Lord Jesus he is *Ambassador extraordinary.*

Men, and Angels too (*Luke 1. 18. 19.*) have been sent and employed by God, but none of them were ever sent, as Christ was, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness : This was he who was the brightness of the Fathers Glory, and the express Image of God, he only was able by himself to purge away sin ; neither was ever any other set about this work but he. God never laid the help and salvation of his people upon any but that mighty one.

Doctrine 1. That Jesus Christ our Mediator, was sent of the Father.

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There is frequent mention made by our Saviour, of his being sent of God: To mention a few places, John 17. 3, *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Vers. 8, *For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.* And again, vers. 21, *That they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.* Vers. 25, *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.*

1. How shall we understand this Phrase, That Christ was sent of the Father?

Sent of God!

This is a great mystery, which we shall not fully understand till we come to Heaven; when Christ is said to be sent of God, 'tis to be understood principally and primarily of him, as he is the Son of God, and so he is said to come down from heaven, John 3. 13. To descend, Eph. 4.9. But he being in that respect equal with God the Father, Eternal, Infinite, Immense, Omnipresent, as the Father is, it may be asked, How the Lord Jesus is said to be sent of the Father?

Answ. 1. The Lord Jesus may be said to be sent of the Father as Mediator, in respect of the Covenant of Redemption between the Father and him, for the salvation of the Elect; for though Christ as God is equal with the Father, yet with reference to the work of Redemption, he is

4 The Glory of Christ set forth.

is said to be his Elected one, and Servant. *Isa. 41. 1, Behold, my servant whom I uphold ; mine Elect in whom my soul delighteth.*

2. The Lord Jesus may be said to be sent of the Father, *in regard of his Incarnation*, so Gal. 4. 4, 5, *But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law.* Now, brethren, upon this account, because the Father prepared him a body, *Heb. 10. 5.* He is said to send him to redeem us.

3. The Lord Jesus may be said to be sent of the Father, *in regard of his commission*; him hath God the Father sealed, *John 6. 37.* Christ and no other is ordained of God, *an high Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedeck.*

2. How doth it appear, that Jesus of Nazareth was the true *Messiah*, he that was sent of God to be the Saviour, according to the Promise made unto the Fathers?

Ans. 1. By the miracles he wrought. Nicodemus could say so much, *John 3. 2.* says he, *We know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles but he who is sent of God.* *John 5. 36, 37,* *I have a greater witness than that of John; for the works that my father hath given me to finish, the same works bear witness of me.* And so, when *John Baptist* sent unto Christ, to know whether he was the *Messiah*, saith our Saviour, *Go and shew him the things which you do hear and see; the Blind receive their sight, and the Lame walk, the Leapers are cleansed.* 'Tis true, the Prophets an-

The Glory of Christ set forth. 5

the Apostles wrought miracles, but not by their own power and holiness: but Christ wrought them by his own power.

2. *By his raising of himself from the dead;* As he is said to be raised by the Father, so he is said to be raised from his own power, *John 2. 20, 21, Destroy, saith he, this temple (speaking of his Body) and I will raise it up in three days.*

To these might be added many other demonstrations, as that all the Notes and Characters of the *Messiah*, mentioned in the *Old Testament*, were fulfilled and accomplished in him. Moreover, every believer hath the witness in himself, that Jesus is the Son of God, *1 John 5. 20.* Their faith is not a mere historical faith, or grounded upon what is commonly owned and professed where they live; but the Spirit beareth witness to their hearts, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God, the true *Messiah* that was to come into the World.

3. The next thing is, to shew you wherefore God sent his Son into the world.

The great business that Christ was sent into the world for, was to save his people from their sins, to save them that were given to him of the Father. There were some particular persons given to Christ by name, to be his people, to be his sheep, that he should take care of, to bring to eternal life. *John 17. 2. Thou hast given me power over all flesh, that I should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me.* *1 John 4. 14. And we have seen, and do testify, that*

6 The Glory of Christ set forth.

that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world, that is, his Elect of the world of mankind: And so it was Prophesied of Christ, *Dan. 9. 24.* that he should make an end of sin, and make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in an everlasting righteousness. There was not one man in the world that was able to make reconciliation for his iniquity; Christ was sent to do that. There was none righteous, no not one. Christ was sent to bring in an everlasting righteousness, to make his people righteous before God; Christ was sent to fulfill the Law for his people, by his Active and Passive obedience: He came to do, and procure all that is required, to the compleat and perfect salvation of his people.

In a word, Jesus Christ was sent into the World, not merely as a Prophet, to teach the Mind and Will of God, or to be an example of holiness; but he was sent to be a Priest, in a proper sense, to make atonement and satisfaction for the sins of his people, and to obtain eternal redemption for them.

Application.

Use 1. We may see here, that the work of Redemption was a great work: Not the highest Angel of Heaven, nor all of them put together were able to perform this; but God sent his Son about this work.

Use 2. We may see here, that the heart of God the Father was in this great work of redeeming and

The Glory of Christ set forth. 7

and saving the elect. The Father himself loved them, for he sent his Son, he gave his only begotten Son, that they might live through him.

Use 3. *We may see here the love of Christ unto those that the Father had given him,* That he was willing to be their Mediator; for as he is often said to be sent of the Father, so he is said to come, *Heb. 10: 7. Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.* Christ was so sent, as that he came freely, came with alacrity and chearfulness; for his delight was with the Sons of men, his heart was in this work.

Lastly, *Let this encourage sinners to come to Christ to venture their souls upon him.* Do not question whether God will accept of you by another's righteousness, discharge you by a payment made by a Surety, deliver you from going down to the Pit upon a ransom given by another; for all this was the contrivement of the Lord himself, to glorifie both his Justice, and his Mercy for ever. Therefore let sinners cast themselves upon Christ and fear not, this Rock will never fail that Soul that is built upon it.

I come now to the next words, where it is said, that Christ speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him.

Doct. 2. *That Jesus Christ, our Mediator, bath the spirit given him by the Father without measure.*

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This is a great and glorious truth, and very sweet and comfortable to the Saints, that the Lord Jesus their Mediator hath a fulness of the spirit. Psal. 45. 7. *Anointed with the oyl of gladness above his fellows.* Christ hath the spirit above what any of the Saints have; and see Isa. 61. 1. Isa. 2. 11. *And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of council and might, the spirit of knowledg and of the fear of the Lord.* And you have a visible fulfilling of those Prophecies, John 1. 32. *And John bare record, saying, I saw the spirit descending from Heaven like a Dove, and it abode upon him.* And so Acts 10. 3. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the Devil, for God was with him. And in another place, It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell. All fullness of the Spirit, all fullness of Grace dwells in Christ.

Three Things for the opening of this point.

1. *What is here meant by the Spirit.*
2. *How the Spirit is said to be given to Jesus Christ, seeing he is God.* How can any gift be said to be conferred upon him, seeing he is God, and infinite in himself?

3. *How it may be said, that the Spirit is given unto him without measure.*

1. *What is here meant by the spirit.*

1. *The Gifts and Graces of the Spirit,* these are given to Christ, not by measure, but without measure.

2. *The*

2. The Spirit it self, Luke 4. 14. And Jesus returned in the power of the spirit full of the Holy Ghost.

Believers have not only the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, but the Spirit it self, Rom. 8.9. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his: and the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, v. 11. And if the Spirit be in Believers, and dwells in them, much more in Christ himself.

2dly. How can Christ, who is God, and so infinite, and uncapable of addition, be said to have the spirit given unto him?

I answer briefly in a word or two. It is true, that Jesus Christ, as God, is infinite, and as God he is not capable of having the spirit given unto him; but the spirit was given unto Jesus Christ as man, the spirit was given to his humane nature which he took upon him.

3dly. If the spirit was given to the humane nature of Christ, how can the humane nature hold the fullness of the spirit? the humane nature is finite, how can it receive an infinite? how then is it said, that God hath not given the spirit by measure unto him?

I answer, The expression in the Text is not to be understood without any limitation, as if the Spirit were given to the humane nature of Christ in an infinite manner, and as if the humane nature were of an infinite capacity; the Divine nature of Christ is infinite, but though the Divine and humane nature in Christ are eternally united, yet they are not confounded.

10 The Glory of Christ set forth.

This then I say, that the spirit was given to the humane nature of Christ, beyond all comparison, beyond all the Saints on Earth or in Heaven, and above all the Angels put them all together. The spirit is given to Christ as man incomparatively, and transcendently beyond what ever men or Angels have had, or shall have. *It pleased the Father, that in him all fullness should dwell;* which cannot be said of any other.

Object. It is said, that Jesus increased in wisdom, and stature, and in favour with God and man, Luk. 2. 52. How had he such a fullness of the Spirit, and yet is said to increase in Wisdom?

I Answer, The Word being made Flesh, he was full of Grace, full of the Spirit from his very birth; but he is said to increase in Wisdom, in respect of the effects and operations, expressions and declarations of his Wisdom.

One Question more, How comes it to be so, that the Lord Jesus is so filled with the spirit in his humane nature?

Answer 1. One reason is taken from the nearness of his humane nature to the Divine. Brethren, Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the natural Son of God, he hath the very essence of God, the nature of God, and the humane nature of Christ is brought very near to the Godhead: It is brought as near as our Bodies to our

our Souls, and therefore it is said, that in him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily, that is personally. The Sun is the Fountain of light, and the nearer we come to the Sun, the more we partake of light ; so the humane nature of Christ being brought so near to the God-head, as to be taken into personal union with the God-head, the humane nature partakes of Grace and Gifts to its utmost capacity.

2. *It was necessary that Christ should be filled in with the spirit in our nature, that so he might be able to manage his work and office, to perform his active and passive obedience, and to be a Storehouse and treasury of grace and consolation to his people, that they may be supplied from him, and of his fullness receive, and grace for grace.*

Application.

Use 1. Learn whence it is that a person may be enabled to speak holily and graciously : It is said here, that Christ spake the words of God, and he brings in this for a reason, for he received not the spirit by measure. The more we have of the Spirit of God, the more we shall speak the Words of God ; and though we can never have so much of the spirit as Jesus Christ had, nor spake the Words of God as he did ; yet let us pray that we may have the spirit, and more and more of the spirit, that we may in our measure speak the Words of God. What is the reason that our words are no more savory and spiritual, God but unprofitable and vain too often ? 'Tis because we have but a little of the spirit, if we

have the spirit at all in a sanctifying way. And for those whose words are altogether carnal and vain, nothing but profane, scurrilous, unclean speeches come from them; such may well think that they have not the Spirit of God. He that hath the Spirit of God, will endeavour in some measure to speak the Word of God; for where the Spirit of God is given in a saving manner, he sanctifies the heart, and sanctifies the tongue, and so causes their words to be gracious and spiritual in some measure. Therefore as we desire that our speech may be with grace, holy and edifying, pray for the spirit to be given unto us. It is said of Christ, that they wondered at the gracious words that proceeded from him; he was full of the spirit, and he spake the words of God. O let us be much in prayer for the spirit, to give us a mouth, and wisdom upon all occasions; pray that we may have the spirit to fill our hearts with holy thoughts, and to fill our mouths with holy discourse.

Use 2. Learn from hence, that when God calls to any work or service, he is wont to give abilities and strength for that work. Our Lord Jesus was called to a great work to be performed in our humane nature, and you see here how he was filled with the spirit and fitted for that work. When God calls us to any work or service, let us not look at the greatness of the work to discourage us; no, but look principally at Gods calling you to it; and if it be so, that God calls us to the work, he will give us of his Spirit.

Spirit in some measure to strengthen us and help us. When *Moses* died, and *Joshuah* succeeded him, he had great difficulties to go through in the work he was called to : But saith the Lord, fear not, be not discouraged, I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Therefore if you be assured that the Lord calls you to the work and service you are employed in, fear not, trust in the Lord, keep in his way, and he will give you strength, he will stand by you, and will not fail you nor forsake you. Follow the Lord in your places, and if sufferings come towards you, the Lord will either put them by, or he will support you and strengthen you with might by his spirit in the inward man.

Use 3. *Learn from hence the excellency of Jesus Christ, in that he is filled with the spirit.* Besides his infinite Glory as God, you may see here what excellency is in him even as to his humane nature, in that the Spirit is not given by measure unto him, but beyond what is given to any other, men or Angels. Take a Saint, and the Spirit and Grace of God in him, adorns him in the eyes of others; you will say there is such a one, how full of love, of wisdom, of humility is he ! this makes him beautiful indeed ! But then how glorious should Christ be in our eyes, both as to his God-head, and as to the wisdom, purity, holiness and fullness of the spirit in his humane nature ? In which respect, even is the Son of man, he is fairer then all the Children of men, and then all the Angels in Heaven.

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Suppose all the grace that is in all the Saints and Angels were abstracted and put all into one, yet this is nothing to the fullness and grace that is in Christ. There is wisdom, love, meekness, and every grace in Christ (that is compatible to his pure and holy nature) without measure.

Use 4. *Learn from hence to go to Christ for the spirit and grace in all our times of need.* He is filled with the spirit in our nature; and as the *Egyptians* when they were ready to starve in the Famine and came to *Pharoah*, he sent them to *Joseph*, go to *Joseph*: So go to Jesus, there you may be supplied, go to Jesus for the spirit to mortify our corruptions, to quicken our graces, to help us in all our duties and sufferings. As *Jacob* said to his Sons, *Why stand ye looking one upon another, there is Corn in Egypt, go and fetch from thence that we may not perish*: So let believers go to Jesus Christ and fetch supplies of grace from him; go to him, as one that is able and willing to help his people in all their times of need.

Lastly, *We may learn from hence the ignorance and blasphemy of those that make a mock of the spirit, and deride others as prizing the spirit*: whereas the excellency of Christ is set forth amongst other things by this, that he was filled with the spirit. 'Tis true, many may pretend to the spirit that have him not; but therefore to make a mock of having the spirit is no less than blasphemy. The Spirit is given

to all Believers, and he that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his, not yet of his called ones ; The Believer is called the Spiritual man, *1 Cor. 2. 15.* Some may pretend to be made partakers of Christ, and yet be mistaken ; but he that shall mock people, and use it as a Reproach to them, that they believe in Christ, and are Christians, is a Blasphemer ; And so is he that shall use it as a Reproach to any, that this is one that hath the Spirit.

Now I come to ver. 35. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.*

These words seem to hold forth the Reason of the former ; he had said before, that God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him, that is, Christ. And why so ? *For the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.*

The Father loves the Elect Angels, and loves Elect men ; but the Father loves the Son above all others. There is an *Emphasis* in the words, *The Father loveth the Son* ; that is, He loves him most eminently, transcendently.

And hath given all things into his hand.] He hath made him the great Commander and Governor of the World.

By *the Son*, here we are not to understand Christ as God, as the Second Person in the Trinity ; but as God-man, Mediator. Indeed the Father loved the Son, as he was God equal with him, of the same Substance and Eternity : But when it is said, that the Father hath given all things into his hand, we must understand it of Christ, as God-man, Mediator : For consider

der Christ as God, -he had all things in his hand, as the Father had; but it is as he is God-man, Mediator, that the Father hath put all things into his hand.

Doct. 1. *That Jesus Christ is beloved of the Father above all Creatures, above Men or Angels.*

It may be some may think there is no great matter in this point; but truly it is of great concernment to us, that we may more confidently look to Christ for our acceptance with God through him. Mat. 3. 17. *This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* Paul speaking of him, *Ephes. 1. 6.* faith, that God *hath made us accepted in the Beloved.* Others are beloved, but Christ is the Beloved. And again, *Colos. 1. 13.* *Who hath delivered us from the Power of Darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son.* Christ himself often makes mention of the Fathers love to him, *Joh. 10. 17.* *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life.* *Joh. 15. 9.* *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.* *Joh. 17. 24.* *Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.* Tis said indeed, *vers. 23.* *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; that the world may know, that thou hast sent me; and that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.* It is true, the Father loves the Elect people as really and truely as he loveth Christ; but he doth not love them so

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abundantly, not in the same degree; neither can they be loved with that kind of Love every way, that the Father loveth the Son, as will appear in the opening of the Point.

First, *Let us enquire wherein the Love of the Father towards Christ doth transcend and exceed his Love to all other Creatures, Men or Angels.*

1: *The Father loveth Christ, as he is the only begotten Son of the same Divine Essence with himself.* Believers are the Sons of God by Adoption, but Christ is the Son of God by an Eternal and Unutterable Generation: Joh. 3. 16. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.* Therefore must the Father needs love Christ above Men or Angels, because he is the only begotten Son; and though they be two distinct Persons, and so they are spoken of in the Text, *the Father and the Son*, yet they are one Essence. And though the Son hath now taken upon him our Nature, yet he is God still, and so continues for ever, and is an adequate, and every way fit object of the Fathers Love, in the highest degree, to Eternity.

2: *The Father loveth Christ above all other creatures, Men or Angels, upon the account of his being the Redeemer and Saviour of the Elect people, whom he hath given him to bring to Glory.* The glory of God's Grace, Wisdom and Justice, is made known in such a wonderful manner by the Lord Jesus as Mediator, that the Father loves him upon that account; Joh. 10. 17. *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my Life.* Vers. 18. *This Commandment*

mandment have I received of my Father. That the Son consented to be Mediator, and to take upon him the Nature of man, and to dye and suffer, to satisfie Justice for Sin, this is highly pleasing to the Father; Heb. 10. 5, 6, 7. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and Offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me; in Burnt-Offerings and Sacrifices for Sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said, Lo I come (in the Volume of thy Book it is written of me) to do thy Will O God. The Father loveth Christ, not only as his Eternal Son, but as he condescended to be Mediator for his People, Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9. Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross. Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him.

The Father delights in Christ, not only as he is the Eternal Son, but as he is his Elected one, Elected to be the Head and Saviour of his Body the Church. Isai. 42. 1. Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect in whom my Soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth Judgment to the Gentiles. That the Son took upon him the form of a Servant, that the Glory of God might be made manifest in him, and that he should bring back and lead the Elect people to God, makes the Father to love him, and delight in him as Mediator. He freely undertook

dertook the work, and has faithfully discharged it, Joh. 17. 4, 5. *I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the Glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

Secondly, *Let us enquire wherein the Father hath shewn and expressed such a great and transcendent Love to Jesus Christ.*

1. *The Father had an unspeakable complacency and delight in Christ from Eternity, and that not only as his Eternal Son, and God equal with him; but as he had consented & agreed to be Mediator for them whom he had appointed to be Heirs of Salvation.* Prov. 8. 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29. *I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, before ever the Earth was. Then was I by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.*

2. *There is the most intimate Fellowship and Communion between the Father and him, in all that the Father doth.* As to the works of Creation, *All things were created by him and for him,* Col. 1. 16. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made,* Joh. 1. 3. And as to the work of Redemption, he was the great Instrument of the Father; tis said, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself,* 2 Cor. 5. 19. *That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth, even in him,* Ephes. 1. 10.

3. *The Father hath shewn all the Benevolence or Beneficence to Christ, as Mediator, as possibly could be.* He hath filled him with the Spirit into our Nature, as full as the Humane Nature can hold; and as he is God manifest in the Flesh, hath given all into his hand, and hath put such honour upon him as Mediator, that whatsoever his People ask in his Name, it shall be given them; and when he comes at the last Day to judge the World in our humane Nature, he shall come in all the Glory of the Father, with all his holy Angels.

Objection. *How did the Father love Christ with such an unspeakable, transcendent Love, seeing it is said, He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up to Death for us all? Rom. 8. 31.* And it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief? *Isai. 53. 10.* It should seem by this, that he loved the Elect people more than Christ, seeing he laid their Iniquities upon Christ, and appointed him to suffer for Sins, the Just for the unrighteous, that he might bring them to God.

Answer first, In general, Take notice, That the Gospel, our Redemption by Christ is such a Mystery, that except we be taught of God, we shall stumble and cavil at it without end.

More particularly; 1. Consider that all the Christ suffered, it was only in his humane Nature. His Godhead could not suffer the least thing.

2. His Godhead backed and supported his Humane Nature, to endure the Cross, and despise the Shame.

3. It was but for a short time that the Humane
Nature of Christ suffered.

4. It was with his own Consent. Lo, I come
to do thy Will, O God, Heb. 10. 7.

5. The Father had no Controversie with Christ,
he had done no evil, neither was any guile found in
his mouth; all that Christ suffered, was as a Surety.

6. The Designe of God in not sparing his Son,
was not merely the Salvation of his People; but to
make known the Riches of the glory of his Wisdom,
Justice and Grace, and so all this would well con-
sist with his Love to the person of Christ.

7. As a consequent of his Sufferings, the humane
Nature of Christ (in which Nature only he Suf-
fered) is highly exalted; and he in our Nature shall
judge the world, and be adored for ever.

Application.

Use 1. Seeing that Christ was so beloved of the
Father, and yet he suffered so much; it may teach
us, that great Sufferings and Afflictions may con-
sist with the Love of God; so long as there was no
inherently in Christ, and that it was for the
glory of God, and was but for a time, a short time,
all this might consist with the Love of God. There-
fore let this comfort Believers under all their
Afflictions and Sorrows in this Life.

Object. May some poor Believer say, If the Lord
all the world over me, would he suffer me to be scandalized and
proached as I am? I am evil-spoken of by many,
and am the Song of the Drunkard, I scarce know
how to bear it.

Answe. I pray consider how Christ endured
the contradiction of Sinners: They said, He was a
Deceit-

Deceiver and was mad ; they said he was a Glutton and a Winebibber ; they said he had a Devil ; yet still he was infinitely beloved of the Father.

Object. *Ay, If I was afflicted but now and then, I might hope that God might love me notwithstanding ; but I am seldom free of one Affliction or another.*

Answer. So it was with Christ while he was here in this world, *He was a man Sorrows*, Isa. 53. 3. yet beloved of the Father, and so may you.

Object. *Ay, But it is not only outward Afflictions that I bear, but inward bitterness, inward Sorrow.*

Answer. Christ went through that too, Mar. 26. 38. *My Soul (faith Christ) is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.*

Object. *Ay, But this is that which makes me fear that I am none of the Lords, because he hides his face from me at times, that I have not sensible communion with him ; but in that respect he doth as it were forsake me.*

Answer. So it was with Christ for a time, *He cried out, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*, Mat. 27. 46.

Object. *Ay, But I am followed with hideous temptations of the Devil, such as I am afraid and ashamed to utter ; as to take away mine own Life, and the like.*

Answer. Jesus Christ, who was beloved of the Father above all, *He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin*, Heb. 4. 15. Then the Devil

Devil taketh him up, and setteth him upon a Pinnacle of the Temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thy self down, Mat. 4. 5, 6.

Now as Christ was a Conqueror over all his Sufferings of every kind, and lifted up his Head after all; so shall Believers through him. Christ after a short time sorrowed no more, was tempted no more, suffer'd no more in any kind, and so it shall be with his people after a little time; For the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living Fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, Rev. 1. 17.

Use 2. Seeing God the Father loveth Jesus Christ with such a transcendent Love, This may teach us what manner of Love the Father hath shewn, in giving of his Son to be a Redeemer of his people. 1 Joh. 4. 9. In this was manifested the Love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

Therefore you that are partakers of this Grace, why should you fear the want of any thing whatsoever that the Lord feeth convenient for you? *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up to Death for us all; how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* Rom. 8. 32. Therefore trust in the Lord for the supply of all your inward and spiritual wants, and trust in the Lord for outward Mercies too; Do not put forth your hands to any unrighteous ways for your subsistence, but trust in the Lord

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that he will perform all things for you, seeing he hath not spared his own Son, but given him to dye for you. All other Gifts are small in comparison of his giving his Son to be made a Curse for us.

Use 3. Seeing the Father loveth the Son in such a wonderful manner, *Then wo be to those that hate him.* 1 Cor. 16. 22. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.* If any man love him not as he is the Son of God, if any man love him not as Mediator, if any man hearing this Jesus preached unto him, doth not approve of this way of Salvation by Christ, and doth deliberately reject him and put him away, let him be cursed till the Lord come; let him still remain under the curse of the Law, and let him be cursed when the Lord cometh; let him be put amongst those to whom Christ will say, *Depart from me ye cursed.*

I fear there may be some amongst us, that will be found haters of the Lord Jesus Christ. If your hearts continue to rise against the way of Salvation by Christ, you will be found haters of him. If you love your sins, and hold them fast, and will not have Christ to reign over you, then you will be found haters of Christ: If you hate the Disciples of Christ, because of his Image and Grace in them, then you will be found haters of Christ. But if you believe in him, and your hearts cleave unto him, and you are troubled that you love him no more, that he is no more precious to you, then go in peace.

Use

Use 4. *Seeing the Father loveth the Son in such a wonderful manner, let this stir us up to love Jesus Christ.* Let us love him as God, and love him as God-man, Mediator: You see he is an object fit for the Love of God the Father, and then he is an object worthy of our love. And as God the Father loves him with a transcendent Love, so let us do likewise. Read what Christ saith, Joh. 14. 21. *If any man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and I will love him, and will manifest my self unto him.* And see verse 23. You will never loose any thing by loving Jesus Christ. Ephes. 6. 24. *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,* Amen.

It follows, *And hath put all things into his hand.*] Before I come to raise the Doctrine from these words, let me briefly shew you the meaning of this expression. *And hath put all things into his hand.* The meaning is, that he hath put all Power and Authority into his hand, he hath made him Supreme Head and Governor over all things; the Father hath made him Ruler and Disposer of all; the great King, Lord and Potentate over all.

And further, take notice, that this is spoken of Jesus as God-man, Mediator; Christ is made the Lord of Heaven and Earth in our Nature. As Christ is the Son of God, so he is equal with the Father; so it cannot be properly said, that the Father hath given all things into his hand; for he had all things originally in his hand as God, but as God-man, Mediator, so

the Father hath given all things into his hand, that now in our nature, in our flesh, he is the great Potentate of the world, and hath all things committed to him of the Father.

Doctrine. That God the Father hath given unto Jesus Christ in our Nature, full Power and Authority over all things, both in Heaven and in Earth, he hath put all things into his hand.

This is a Point of great Concernment, and for the great comfort and establishing of Believers in evil times, that all things are given into the hand of our great Mediator. You see *John Baptist* here gives a full testimony to this truth; will you hear what *Christ* saith in his own person, *All things are delivered unto me of my Father*, Mat. 11. 27. And *Jesus* came and spake unto them, saying, *All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth*. Joh. 13. 3. *Jesus* knowing that the Father had given all things into his hand---

1. *To shew you how all things are put into the hand of Christ, given into his hand.*

1. *All men are given into Christ's hand.* But here we must distinguish, There are some given to Christ in a special manner, and for their eternal Salvation: There are some given to Christ to that very end and purpose, that he should give them Eternal Life. Joh. 17. 2. *As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal Life to as many as thou hast given him.* You see that some are so given into Christ's hand, that he by his Office of Mediator is engaged and hath undertaken to give them

them Eternal Life. Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall bear my voice, Joh. 10. 16. Christ there calls them whom the Father hath given him in the Covenant of Redemption, his sheep, though they are not yet converted, and faith, he must bring them in, and they shall hear his voice. Joh. 17. *I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me, for they are thine;* and yet he prayed as Mediator, not only for them that were then Believers and converted, but for them that should afterwards believe unto everlasting Life. Vers. 20. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.* Vers. 24. *Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory.*

2. *The rest of men are put into Christ's hand, even those that perish; so as that Christ hath full power to over-rule them and their actings; so as that they shall not quite root out his Church, so as that he shall have Glory in carrying on his work, so far as he pleases, against all their opposition; punish them so far as he thinks fit in this Life, and pass sentence of everlasting Damnation against them at the Last Day.*

Thus we see all men are given into Christ's hand, Elect and non-Elect; the Elect to redeem and save, and the rest to order them and dispose of them as he pleases in this World, and to judge them at the Last Day.

2. *All the Angels are given into Christ's hands.*

The Elect Angels are given into his hand to confirm them, as some think, and to make use of them in his Mediatory Kingdom, as he pleases. The fallen Angels are given into his hand, so as that he hath Power to check them and restrain them, and set bounds to them, that they shall not Devour and Prevail against any of his redeemed People; and likewise to sit in Judgment upon them, and pass open Sentence of Condemnation upon them at the Last Day. Ephes. 1. 21, 22. 'Tis said of Christ, *That he is far above all Principality, and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the Church.* Luk. 10. 17. *And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the Devils are subject to us through thy Name.*

3. All Creatures, whether animate or inanimate, are given into the hand of Christ as Mediator, God-man.

1. All animate Creatures, all rational Creatures. Phil. 2. 9, 10. *Wherefore also God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name; That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven and things on Earth-----*

2. All inanimate, all irrational Creatures. Psal. 8. 5, 6, 7, 8. *For thou hast made him a little lower than the Angels; (viz. barely considered as man, though far above all the Angels, as God-man; Mediator) and hast crowned him with Glory and*

Honour.

Honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hand ; thou hast put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the Sea.—

4. *All things that do concern the ordering of the Churches here in this world, are given and committed to Christ as Mediator.* What Officers shall be in his Churches, what Discipline, Government, Censures, Ordinances and Worship, these things are not left to mens Inventions, but all must be ordered as Christ hath appointed in the Word, Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20. *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded.* The very Apostles were limited, that they should teach nothing to be observed in Spiritual matters, but what Christ commanded, and then much more all Church-Guides in these days ; for the Father hath given the Power of making Laws and Orders for his Church into Christ's hand only. No Power on Earth can add or take away from the Sacraments, Censures, Officers and Ordinances that Christ hath appointed ; for the Father hath given all things into his hand.

5. *All Providential Dispensations in this world are given into the hand of Christ ; all publick and private concerns ; Thou hast given him Power over all flesh, Joh. 17. 2. For the Father*

judgeth no man, but hath committed all Judgment unto the Son, Joh. 5. 22. We must not understand these things, as if God the Father had so put things into the hand of Christ, as if he had not Power and Authority still over all ; but the meaning is, that he hath given the management of all into Christ's hand, as Mediator, by way of Honour and Trust, to order all for the Glory of God, and for the Eternal Salvation of those, whom he hath given him to be his Mystical Body.

And so I come to the Second thing, to shew you, *Why, or to what end the Father hath given all things into Christ's hands as Mediator :*

1. *The Father hath done this for his own Glory.* Phil. 2. 11, 12. *Wherfore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name above every name, ---That every tongue shuld confess that Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.* Tis for the Glory of God the Father, that he hath laid help upon such a mighty One, and set such a King upon his holy Hill of Zion.

2. *The Father hath done this for the Glory of Christ too : That all men should honour the Son, as they honour the Father, Joh. 5. 32.* *Wherfore when he brings in the first begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him,* Heb. 1. 6.

3. *The Father hath done it for the Churches sake too ; for the Elect's sake he hath given him to be the head over all things to the Church,* Ephes. 1. 22. *to order all things for the accomplishing and perfecting their Salvation ; and to that end he hath*

hath the heart of man amongst other things given into his hand, that Christ hath power as Mediator, to make his people willing to close with him. *Psal. 110. 3. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. Joh. 6. 37. All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me. Joh. 12. 32. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*

Application.

Use 1. Seeing the Father hath given all things into Christ's hand, then let us all come to Christ, receive him, believe in him: And this is the very Use that Christ himself makes of this point.

Mat. 11. 27, 28. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: And no man knoweth the Son but the Father: Neither knoweth any man the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever he will reveal him. Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Seeing the Father hath given all into Christ's hand, come unto him for whatsoever you want, come to him for Pardon, for Righteousness, for peace of Conscience, for Knowledg, for Sanctification, for all. Joh. 6. 27. Labour not for the meat that perishes, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting Life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed. He hath Authority and Commission from the Father, all things are given into his hand. Him hath God the Father sealed, therefore come unto him, that you may have the meat that endureth to everlasting Life; He hath the keys of

of Hell and of Death, He is able to save to the uttermost, He is able to rescue you from the very jaws of Hell ; therefore, I say , venture your Souls upon him. The Father hath appointed him to be Prophet, Priest and King ; come therefore unto him for all that you stand in need of.

Use 2. *Seeing the Father bath given all into Christs hand, let all submit to Jesus Christ.* Psal. 2. 12. *Kiſſ the Son leſt he be Angry, and ye perish from the way.* We are all to do Homage to Christ, to be ſubject to Christ ; and this is called a Kiffing of the Son. You read of those that did not bow the knee to *Baal*, nor kiffed him ; It is ſpoken of the People of God that would not owne *Baal* : and the Idolaters that worshipped the Sun and the Moon, because they could not reach them to kiſſ them , therefore they kiffed their hand, in token of Homage and Subjection to them, as is implied in *Job*'s words, Chap. 31. 26, 27. So that this is one thing that is intended by this Phrase , of Kiffing the Son, that we ſhould do Homage unto him and be ſubject unto him. Therefore ſeeing all is given into Christs hand , and he ſhall Judge the Quick and the Dead at his appearing and his Kingdom , give diligencē that you may be found of him in Peace , that you may be accepted in him as a Saviour , and accepted of him as a Judge ; for we muſt all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ.

But may ſome ſay, When we conſider what a great Lord, Jesus Christ is , and that the Fa-
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ther hath made him the Judge of all, and that he shall come in all the Glory of the Father, with all his holy Angels, and all must appear before his Judgment-Seat, to give an account, the thoughts of Christ begin to be terrible to us sinful, guilty creatures ; we begin to say in our hearts, *How shall we be able to stand before this great Lord and Judge ?*

Answer. *Christ is a Priest as well as a King, a Saviour as well as a Judge ;* So that if you put your trust in him as a Mediator, and be found in his Righteousness, then you may be able to stand before him, else not. Therefore labour to know Christ in his Priestly Office, and believe in him, that you may be washed and made white in his Blood, and that he may be the Lord your Righteousness ; then you may have boldness to stand before him, and not be ashamed and confounded at his coming. Therefore, I say, now come to him as a Saviour, before whom at last you must come as a Judge.

Use 3. *Seeing all things are given into Christ's hand, let not Believers fear these black storms of Persecution that may come upon them in this world.* The same Jesus that shed his Blood for his People, he hath the ordering, over-ruling, and disposing of all things : Know that nothing can come upon you, but it must pass through the hand of Christ, therefore fear not : Not only men, but Devils also are subject to his Power ; yea, he hath Power over our Lusts and Corruptions, therefore they shall not have dominion over us. And in the worst times,

fear

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Use 2. *Seeing the Father hath given all into Christs hand, let all submit to Jesus Christ.* Psal. 2. 12. *Kiss the Son lest he be Angry, and ye perish from the way.* We are all to do Homage to Christ, to be subject to Christ ; and this is called a Kissing of the Son. You read of those that did not bow the knee to *Baal*, nor kissed him ; It is spoken of the People of God that would not owne *Baal* : and the Idolaters that worshipped the Sun and the Moon, because they could not reach them to kiss them , therefore they kissed their hand, in token of Homage and Subjection to them, as is implied in *Job's* words, Chap. 31. 26, 27. So that this is one thing that is intended by this Phrase , of Kissing the Son, that we should do Homage unto him and be Subject unto him. Therefore seeing all is given into Christs hand , and he shall Judge the Quick and the Dead at his appearing and his Kingdom , give diligence that you may be found of him in Peace, that you may be accepted in him as a Saviour , and accepted of him as a Judge ; for we must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ.

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fear not that the People of God will be rooted out; no, Christ sitteth upon the flood, he sitteth King for ever.

Object. But if the ordering of all things is given into Christ's hand, it seems strange, that he suffers many times his Enemies to be the chief in Power, and his People to be low and persecuted.

Answer. Christ suffers it, yea, orders it so, that he may have the greater Glory in carrying on his work against so much opposition. The Gospel never prevailed more in the world, than when the Rulers were Heathens and Persecutors: and Christ hath Glory too, in punishing his Enemies here and hereafter. And as for the People of God, they are the more Spiritual, and Heavenly, and Courageous in times of Persecution.

Use 4. Seeing all things are given into Christ's hand, this may assure us of the perseverance of Believers. What should hinder it? Christ is above Satan, above the corruption of their hearts; and seeing the Father hath given them to him, he will keep them unto the end. Joh. 17. 12. Those whom thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, save the Son of Perdition. And as for Judas, called here the Son of Perdition, he never was a Believer in the sense that the rest were, Joh. 6. 64. but a Devil, vers. 70. Though Judas was given to Christ to be an Apostle for a time, and given into Christ's hand, as the very Devils are, so as that he

he shall punish them for ever; yet *judas* was never so given to Christ to redeem, to save, to bring to Glory, to be a Member of his Mystical Body: For those that are so given to Christ, not one of them can be lost, seeing Christ hath taken the charge of their Salvation, and wants neither Wisdom, nor Faithfulness, nor Love, nor Power, to bring them safe to Heaven.

Now I come to ver. 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life: And he that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Here you have the Conclusion of this Heavenly Sermon, or Speech of *John the Baptist*. He had set forth Christ's Glory and Excellency as the Churches Bridegroom, ver. 29. *He that hath the Bride, is the Bridegroom: but the friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and beareth him, rejoiceth greatly, because of the Bridegroom's voice: This my joy therefore is fulfilled.* He had shewn, how he must increase and be glorious in the eyes of all; that he came from above, from Heaven, and is above all; that the Father sent him, and gave him the Spirit above measure; that the Father loved him, and hath given all things into hand.

And now he comes to make the Use and Application of this, *That men would believe on the Name of the Son of God.* This Duty of Believing

ving on Christ, is pressed by two strong Arguments, or Motives.

The first Argument is taken from the great benefit that comes by believing on Christ. [He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life.] This is a great benefit indeed, Life is very desirable, especially everlasting Life; yea, for further encouragement to believe in Christ, he saith, *That he that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting Life;* Not only that he shall have it, but he hath it already; he hath everlasting Life.

The second Argument is taken from the contrary; namely, *The great Danger, the great Evil and Miserie that will be the portion of all those that do not believe the Son.* And this is set out, not only Privatively, he shall not see Life; but Positively, as an addition to that misery, *The wrath of God abideth on them.*

Doct. 1. *That he that believes on Christ the Son of God, hath everlasting Life.*

Doct. 2. *That he that believeth not the Son, that believeth not in the Lord Jesus, shall not see Life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Doct. 1. *That whosoever believeth on Christ the Son of God hath everlasting Life.*

This is much spoken of, That he that believeth on the Son, is delivered from the wrath to come: Joh. 3. 14, 15, 16. *As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.*

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Joh. 6. 40. *This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have everlasting Life.* And vers. 47. *Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting Life.* He speaks it with an Assveration, Verily, verily, he that believeth on me hath everlasting Life. Joh. 20. 31. *But these things are written, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have Life through his Name.*

1. Let us enquire, *what is meant by this everlasting Life*, that is, the Portion of every one that believeth in Christ.

2. *What is this believing, this Faith, upon which a Man or Woman comes to have everlasting Life.*

3. *To give you some Demonstrations, or Arguments, to prove that he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life; Because possibly some may Question it.*

4. *Shew you in what Sense he that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting Life already; for the Text faith, such an one hath everlasting Life.*

1. Let us enquire *what is meant by this everlasting Life*, which is the Portion of every believing Soul.

By everlasting Life, here we are not to understand that Life that consists in the Union of Body and Soul: No, Brethren, though our Bodies and Souls should be everlasting united, and never be seperated by Death, yet that is not the everlasting Life here spoken of; yea, and the Damned at the Resurrection shall have their

their Bodies and Souls united together, and shall so continue to Eternity, and yet they never see this everlasting Life.

This everlasting Life in the Text is the greatest hapiness that we are capable of; It consists in Two things.

1. *Freedom from all sin and from all evils whatsoever*, called, *I Thess. 5. 9.* The obtaining of Salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. *The enjoyment of all that is Perfectly Good.* Grace and Glory, *Psal. 84. 11.* this state is called the better Country, even *an Heavenly*, *Heb. 11. 16.* God is the Believers God, and he hath prepared for them a City; and in enjoying God they enjoy all.

And then, observe, that the Happiness of Believers is for ever; they are not freed from all evil for a time only, and enjoy all good for a time only; but for ever: And so they have everlasting Life.

2. Let us enquire *what is this believing*, what this Faith is, upon which a man or woman comes to have everlasting Life.

I answer, *Tis not a bare assent to the Truth of the Gospel*; *Tis not a meer Historical Faith*: *Yea*, though you should be somewhat affected with it, and hear the Word with Joy, and do many things as Herod did.

But this *believing*, is a Receiving of Christ himself in some word of Grace, whereby the bumbled Sinner doth wholly rely upon Jesus Christ for Life and Salvation. Although we are to believe all that is Written in the Law and the Prophets, and

and the whole Word of God; yet Christ as a Saviour and Mediator is the object of justifying Faith, Gal. 3. 2. Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith? Faith is wrought in us by the hearing of the Gospel, by some word of Grace wherein Christ is held forth as a Saviour, either Explicitly or Implicitly. The Text saith, *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life.* And Paul bids the Taylor, *believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.* So that whatsoever word the Lord hints to us, to work and beget Faith in our Hearts, yet the Soul doth not stay there, but Ventures and Casts it self wholly upon Jesus Christ, as the Saviour and Mediator.

Thirdly, To give you some Demonstrations, or Arguments, to prove, that whosoever believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life.

1. God the Father promised this to Christ the Mediator, in the behalf of his Ransomed ones: Tit. 1. 2. *In hope of Eternal Life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began.* God promised to Christ no less than Eternal Life for his Seed. Rom. 6. last, *The Gift of God is Eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* 1 Joh. 2. 25. *This is the Promise which he hath promised us, even eternal Life.* This was promised to Christ, that by his Obedience all his People should be made Righteous, and have Eternal Life.

2. Christ, as Mediator, prayed for no less than Eternal Life for his people, and the Father always heareth him. Joh. 17. 24. *Father, I will, that*

that those whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me—

3. *Jesus Christ hath purchased Eternal Life for his People : Hebr. 9. 15. And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of Death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which are called, might receive the Promise of Eternal Inheritance.* Christ having made Satisfaction for the Sins of his People, and brought in an everlasting Righteousness for them, What should now hinder them of Everlasting Life, who believe on his Name.

4. One thing more, to shew you in what sense it is said in the Text, *That he that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting Life*; not only shall have it, but hath Everlasting Life.

Seeing that Believers have Sin dwelling and remaining in them, and are liable to Temptations and Buffetings of Satan, and liable to all kind of outward Sorrows and Afflictions, and have this Earthly Tabernacle yet to put off; How can it be said, that a Believer now hath everlasting Life?

I answer, 1. *In regard of the certainty of it.* As when it is said *Babylon is fallen*; 'Tis as certain that *Babylon shall fall*, as if it were fallen already: So it is as certain, that Believers shall have everlasting Life, as if they had it already. And so it is said, 2 Tim. 1. 9. *Who hath saved us and called us.* We are saved already.

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2. In regard that everlasting Life is begun to a Believer: Every Believer is in a justified estate, his Sins pardoned, and the Righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and Holiness and Communion with God is begun already in this Life; his Fellowship is now with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ.

3. In regard of Christ our head; Ephes. 2. 6, *He hath raised us up, and made us sit together in Heavenly Places in Christ.* The members of the mystical Body are now in Heaven, though not in their own Persons, yet in Christ their Head; Heb. 6. 20. *Whither the fore-runner is for us entered, even Jesus;* He hath taken up Heaven for them, and appears in the presence of God for them.

Application.

Use 1. From what is said here, That he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life; and he that believeth not on the Son, shall not see Life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. Learn that there is an everlasting estate appointed for every one, either everlasting Life, or everlasting Death. An eternity there is for every one of us, and we are near it, we are upon the brink of it, we are near Heaven or Hell. The Lord knows that we mind these present things too much, and eternity very little: But, O! That when we come to dye, to go into eternity, that we may be in Christ; that so when the Earthly house of this Tabernacle shall be dissolved, we may have a Building of God, an House not

made with hands Eternal in the Heavens. O! that we may remember our eternal condition more, that the thoughts of Eternity may be with us in our Callings and Busines all the day long; and that we may make sure of our interest of Christ, that we may have everlasting Life.

Use 2. *Wonder at the Lord's Grace in Christ, that he should give everlasting Life to any of us, fallen, sinful men.* God doth not give everlasting Life to any of the Angels that sinned; but cast them all down to Hell. And you that live under the Preaching of the Gospel, bless God that you hear of these glad tidings of everlasting Life through Christ; and hearing this way of Life Preached and Declared to you, O! that you may receive Christ, That you may believe on him, that you may have everlasting Life.

Use 3. *Here is matter of strong consolation to those that have believed on the Son; O! Let such rejoice in the Grace of God, the Lord hath abounded towards them in his kindness through Christ Jesus; It is true, you may meet with many sorrows here in this world, but rejoice in this, that there is no Condemnation to you; because you are in Christ Jesus: And not only no Condemnation, but you have everlasting Life. You may lose Estate, Name, Liberty, and Life in this World, but you can never lose everlasting Life: for he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life.*

Use 4. Here is Direction to those that are convinced of their sins, that are weary and heavy laden, whose consciences are pressed with the burden of their sins, as if they had a heavy mountain lay upon them; O! Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sin of the World; believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved and have everlasting Life. You know not what to do, but O flee to Christ for help, he came into the World to save sinners, and he is able to save all that come unto God by him, whatsoever their guilt, whatsoever their sins are.

The second Argument, or motive to believe in Christ, is taken, from the Misery, and lost Estate and Condition of those who do not believe on Christ. *He that believeth not the Son shall not see Life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Doct. 2. That he that believeth not the Son shall not see Life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.

He that believeth not the Son, that is, he that believeth not on the Son ; this is Spoken in Opposition to the former part of the Verse.

He shall not see Life.] 'Tis a Metaphorical Expression; the meaning is, he shall not enjoy everlasting Life, he shall not enter into it, he hath no part in eternal Life: yea, and for the present, *the wrath of God abideth on him*, as to the State and Condition wherin he is.

Some take these words to be intended, of
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those only; who never to the last, believe in Christ, that such shall not see Life, *but the wrath of God abideth on them.* This is true, but because the Apostle saith even of the Elect, that they *are by Nature Children of Wrath, even as others,* Ephes. 2. 3. We may take the words so, that all whatsoever, whilſt unbelievers, shall not see Life, *but the wrath of God abideth on them.* The Elect, though they are given to Christ from Eternity, yet they are neither justified nor Sanctified till they do believe in Christ. Indeed, the Lord hath thoughts of Peace to them, which shall be manifested in due time; but they having sinned as well as others, they are under the Curse of the Law as well as others, until they do believe on Christ; yet so, as that they shall not any one of them have the Sentence of Condemnation Executed upon them, but shall be delivered from going down to the Pit; Because the Lord hath found a Ransom for them. The Decree of Election shall be executed upon them, and the Redemption of Christ shall be applied to them, to prevent the fall and final Execution of the Curse of the Law, in their Eternal Damnation.

But as for those who never believe one the Son, the Curse of the Law comes Fully and Eternally upon them, *and so the Wrath of God abideth on them for ever.* All have sinned in Adam, and so are become guilty before God; All have an inward Rebellion and Opposition in their Nature against God: All when they come to understanding are Guilty of Actual

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sin: So that it cannot be, that ever we should see Life, but should have the wrath of God abide upon us, except we be justified freely by Grace, through the Redemption which is in Jesus Christ our Lord; and we receive this Grace by believing on Christ, *whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation for sins, through Faith in his Blood*, Rom. 3.25. It is by Faith, that we receive the attonement that Christ hath made for our sins, and the everlasting Righteousness that he hath performed for us.

Now concerning the Wrath of God which the Text speaks of, you must not understand it as if there were such Passions in God as there are in man: but the Scripture speaks of things to our weak capacities. God's Wrath is his afflicting and punishing, 'tis his revenging Justice, and this all men are liable unto for their sins, who do not believe on the Name of the Son of God.

Application.

Use 1. *Learn hence, that it is not incongruous or disagreeing to the Preaching of the Gospel, to hold forth threatenings of Wrath.* Here John the Baptist, in this Evangelical discourse of Christ, doth hold forth most terrible threatenings unto those, that continue in the state of Unbelief; he saith, *They shall not see Life, but the Wrath of God abideth on them.* And so our Saviour, when he sent out the Apostles to Preach unto the Gentiles, saith he, *He that believeth not, shall be Damned*, Mark. 16. 16. Threatnings are a means appointed to awaken us to see our danger, and are useful in the Preaching of the Go-

spel, Hebr. 2. 3. *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation?* Hebr. 12. 25. *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on Earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from Heaven.* Therefore both the Terrors of the Law, and the Threatnings for refusing Christ the Mediator, are to be set home upon the Consciences of men.

Use 2. Learn hence what cause they have to rejoice and praise the Lord, who have been drawn to Christ, to know him and believe in him. Such are not only delivered from the wrath to come, but they shall see Life, they shall enjoy everlasting Life.

And though Believers have the Death of the Body to encounter with, yet they need not be dismayed; they may say with the Apostle, 1 Cor. 15. 55. *O ! Death, where is thy sting ? O ! Grave, where is thy Victory ?* He triumphs over Death, as if it were a poor unarmed Captive, Where is thy power and strength ? And as to Afflictions, although Believers may have much of the Cross, yet they have nothing of the Curse: *Christ hath delivered us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us,* Gal. 3. 13. *And we know that all things shall work for good to them that love God, who are called according to his purpose,* Rom. 8. 28.

You that are Believers in Christ, you may have free access to God through him; you may ask for your selves, you may ask for your

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Children, that they might live before him; you may ask for the Nation, you may ask for your Friends: Though you be unworthy in yourselves, yet coming in his Name, and as those that are in him, whatsoever you ask according to the Will of God, he heareth you: And besides all your Mercies and Priviledges here, when your days are expired, you shall have the full enjoyment of Everlasting Life.

Use 3. Seeing he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see Life, but the wrath of God abideth on him: *This should put us all upon this great work of believing on Christ.* This seems to be the very scope of this holy man *John Baptist*, in what he had said here; he would have those that he spake unto, to believe on Jesus Christ: He shews them it is a matter of great concernment, a matter of Life and Death. Be you perswaded of it, that this is a truth that *John Baptist* here speaks, *That he that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.* And O! Do you think that you are able to grapple with the wrath of God? Can you endure to have the wrath of God to abide upon you?

Let me beseech one thing of you, even for the Lord's sake and for your own Souls sake, that when you come home, that you would retire a little, get alone and seriously ponder these words, *He that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* Ask

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your own hearts, whether you believe what is spoken here, and that it shall be fulfilled upon all those that reject Christ? And when you are alone, put it upon your hearts to consider seriously, what it is to have the wrath of God abide upon you; what a miserable condition that will be.

If you had but a Sentence of Death passed upon you by a Judge of Assize, how terrible is it to most men! But then, how dreadful will this be to you, when the Lord shall say, Depart from me ye Cursed? when the Lord shall say, that you shall never see Life, but the wrath of God shall abide on you for ever?

Did you never see one under a deep sense and apprehension of God's wrath? O how such an one will cry out! And yet it is but some drop, or so, that falls upon the Conscience here in this Life, in comparison of Hell. If you have not seen any under the sense of God's wrath, consider what the Scripture faith of *Cain* and *Judas*, what Terrors they were under; and read the Story of *Francis Spira*, there you may see what amazing, astonishing Expressions and Wishes came from him, under a sense of God's wrath lying upon him; he was so tormented, that but he was watched by his Friends, and could not get opportunity, he would have killed himself.

Yea, and consider our Lord Jesus Christ, who never had any sin inherent in him; yet standing in the room of his People, and having their

their sins imputed to him, that by his Suffering in their stead, Justice might be satisfied for Sin ; How he was filled with Astonishment and Grief under the wrath of God due to our sins, Mat. 26. 38. *Then saith he unto them, My Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.* Luk. 22. 44. *And being in an Agony he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.* And he cried out upon the Cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?* We must not think that the Captain of our Salvation was thus sorrowful, and sweat drops of Blood, and cried out so vehemently for the fear and pain of bodily death , which many Martyrs and other men have endured without any great disturbance ; but Christ bare that in his Sufferings, that was ten Thousand times more dreadful ; he had the Iniquities of all his people at once laid upon him, and so bare the wrath of God due unto them. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Mighty One, being God-man, soon made Satisfaction for the sins of his people, and so was acquitted and discharged, and is now in the same Nature wherein he Suffered, at the right hand of God. But I pray consider, If we bear the wrath of God our selves , what shall we do ? You see it is no light matter, it will be a burden too heavy for us to bear, it will make us wish again and again, that we had never been born. And truely , if we do not believe on the Son, who hath born wrath for Sinners , and who alone delivers from the wrath to come, it must abide

abide upon us. Think of these things between the Lord and your own Souls, and let us call to one another, and awaken one another, and tell one another of the danger that we are in. If this house where we are were set on fire, and one were asleep here, it were time to awaken them. O! If you have Children, Servants, Acquaintance, that are in an ignorant and profane way, call to them and endeavour to convince them of their sins, and draw them to believe in Christ.

Quest. But it may be, some will say, you press this believing in Christ very much, and what is there in believing, that those that believe should have Everlasting Life?

Answ. There is nothing of Merit of Efficiency or Causality in our believing, to free us from the wrath of God, and to bring us to everlasting Life. For everlasting Life is the Gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; so that we do not set up Faith to have any part with Christ in the Glory of our Salvation. But I pray consider it, that Faith is that Grace, whereby we lost Sinners, being convinced of our Sins, and having no hope of any help and relief in our selves, do wholly betake our selves to Jesus the Mediator for our Salvation. So that Christ is all, and doth all, and by Faith we receive and embrace Christ our Justifier. And so hath the Lord ordained, that by going out of our selves, and receiving Christ the Mediator, we have the Gift of Righteousness, even the Righteousness of

of Christ imputed to us, to the Justification of Life: So that it is not Faith as a Work, but Faith as a Hand or Instrument, whereby we receive Christ the Saviour, that justifies us in the sight of God.

Quest. *But how shall I come to believe on the Lord Jesus?*

Answ. 1. *You must be convinced of Sin.* You must see that you are guilty before God, that you cannot stand before the Holy Lord God. But alas! Mens hearts are so taken up with the Cares and Pleasures of the world, and think so little of Eternity and the Judgment to come, that it is in the thoughts of few, how they shall be discharged from the guilt of their Sins, and have everlasting Life.

2. *You must see that there is no help for you in your own personal Righteousness.* How can there, when you have sinned already? And all the Righteousness that you can perform in this Life, is defective and full of Imperfections? You must know that there must be a perfect Righteousness to justify you.

3. *You must know that Christ is he that is Ordained of God to be the Saviour:* That you can be saved only by his Blood and Righteousness, and so cast your self wholly upon him. This Faith is the Gift of God. No man can come to Christ except the Father, which hath sent him, draw him. And though some may think this believing in Christ, a notion, a fancy, or however a common or easy thing; yet as it is a real thing wrought in the hearts of the Elect

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by the Spirit of God; so it is no easy thing to believe truly on Christ, when a sinner is convinced of the Greatness of God, the Holiness of his Law, the revenging Justice of God, and his own guilt and filth, it is a great work of God to fix and stay the heart upon the Lord Jesus Christ; to deliver such a one from going down to the pit, and bring the soul to everlasting Life.

Object. I dare not come to Christ, because I do not know I am Elected.

Answer. You cannot know that you are elected, until you believe in Christ; by this you may know your Election, if the Gospel of the Grace of God come to your heart with such Power of the Holy Ghost, as to draw and fix your heart to Jesus the Mediator. Though God's Eternal Election be a great Truth, which you may find of great use for your establishing in the Grace of God afterwards; yet that which now concerns the convinced sinner, is to cast himself upon Christ, to believe in Christ; and when you have received him, you are in a state of acceptation with God through him, then you shall know in due time, that this great Love of God towards you is not of yesterday; but that he ordained and appointed you to obtain this Salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord, before the Foundation of the World was laid.

Use 4. This Doctrine concerning believing in Christ,

Christ, may teach us our great Blindness and Ignorance of the way of Life and Salvation, until some Gospel-light shine upon us. Men are more easily convinced, that it is their Duty to pray to God, and to live soberly and righteously, than they are convinced of the necessity of going out of themselves to Christ, that they may have Everlasting Life by believing on him. The way of the Gospel is new and strange, until the Holy Ghost convinces us of this way of Righteousness and Life.

Therefore study the Gospel, study upon Jesus the Mediator, hear him Preached, and the Lord draw our hearts effectually unto Jesus Christ, that so believing on the Son, we may have the beginning of Everlasting Life here, and the full enjoyment of it in Heaven.

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SERMON II.

John V. 25.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.

I Shall spend but a little time in the coherence of these words, only take notice of two main things in this Chapter:

1. *A Narration of a great Miracle that Christ wrought, in healing a man, that had an infirmity thirty and eight years, vers. 8, 9.*

2. *Christ's Apology that he made for himself against the Jews for what he had done. It being upon the Sabbath-day, that Christ healed the man, they pretended that Christ had broken the Sabbath; Vers. 16. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath-day. The men of the world will always make some pretence to persecute Christ and his People; but Christ Justifies his Action, in making the man*

man whole upon the Sabbath-day: and though he might have Justified the act, as being a work of mercy, which may consist with the most strict observation of the Sabbath; yet our Saviour vindicates himself upon a higher Ground and Reason, namely, by asserting his Divine Nature and God-head. Saith he, Vers. 17. *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the Sabbath (as they Ignorantly thought he had done) but said also, that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.* Our Saviour sheweth, that the Father worketh upon the Sabbath-day, in doing good, shewing mercy and kindness; yet with perfect rest in himself, and so doth the Son. He sheweth how he being the Son of God, and equal with God, doth co-operate with the Father, in all his works, which the Father doth; Vers. 20. yea, and that as Mediator God-man, the Father hath committed all unto him: He raiseth Dead Bodies, and he raises Dead Souls.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall Live.

In the 28. Vers. Our Saviour speaks of his *raising those that are dead in their Graves:* But in the Text, he speaks of *raising those that are dead in their Sins.*

You have this great work of Christ in raising dead souls, set forth by Four circumstances.

1. By the *Time* when; *The hour is coming, and now is.*

2. By the *Means and way* by which he would do this great work, of raising dead Souls; and that is by his voice: *The dead shall bear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.*

3. By the *Certainty* of it; *I say unto you, I that am the Truth.*

4. By an *Attestation* and *Asservation*; *Verily, verily, It shall be so, I attest it; Verily, verily I say unto you—*

The Hour is coming, and now is.] Christ did always gather, and call, and make alive the Elect people: But the time was now come, when he would send forth his Apostles to Preach amongst the Gentiles, to gather the Elect people that were scattered abroad: And therefore he saith, *The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead (even amongst the Gentiles) shall bear the voice of the Son of God, and live.* And our Saviour speaks to the same purpose, Joh. 10. 15, 16. *I lay down my Life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: (which are not of the people of the Jews) them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice—*

Doct. *That those that are spiritually dead, dead in trespasses and sins, by hearing the voice of the Son of God, are made to live.*

Ephes. 2. 1. *And you hath he quickned, who were dead in trespasses and sins; that is the estate of all men by nature. But Christ can make dead*

dead Souls alive : He can do it by a word, and as easily as we can speak a word. You read of several that Christ raised up from bodily Death, when he was here upon the Earth, and he did it by speaking to them, *Mark 5. 41.* one was *Jairus* his Daughter, *And he took the Damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Tabitha cumi, which is being interpreted, Damsel, (I say unto thee) arise.* *And straightway the Damsel arose.* And the Widows Son, *Luk. 7. 14, 15.* *And he came and touched the Bier (and they that bare him stood still) and he said, I say unto thee youngman arise; and he that was dead sate up and began to speak.* And so *Lazarus, Job. 11.* when he had been dead four days, *vers. 43, 44.* *He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth; and he that was dead came forth.*

And as Christ raised up those that were bodily dead by his Voice, by his Word : So if he say the word, if he say to one that is dead in sin, *Rise up, Come forth, the dead Soul shall live.* *Verily, verily, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that bear shall live.*

For the opening the Point.

1. *That by Nature we are Spiritually dead.*
2. *What that Life is that Christ gives to dead sinners.*
3. *What this Voice of the Son of God is, by which dead sinners are made to live.*
4. *What the Lord doth work upon those that are dead in sin, when he makes them Spiritually alive.*

5. *The Application.*

1. *That by Nature we are spiritually dead.* You read of some that are *dead whilst they live*, 1 Tim. 5. 6. And saith Christ, *Let the dead bury the dead, but follow thou me.* As the Body without the Soul is dead: So we now being without Christ, are dead men and women.

1. *We are dead men in regard of the Sentence of Death and Condemnation past upon us by the Law.* Gal. 3. 10. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in every thing that is Written in the Book of the Law to do it.* Rom. 5. 12. *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, for that all have sinned.* All our first Father Adam's house are but dead men before the Lord; we are all guilty before God: Though we are not executed, yet we are under the Sentence of Death by the Law; and the Sentence of the Law will be executed at last, if we be not pardoned in Christ.

2. *We are dead men as to the life of Grace and trae Holiness.* Our best works are but *dead works*. Heb. 9. 14. *The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.* Though, indeed, before Conversion we may do things that are good for the matter; yet we do nothing from a right principle, and to a right end, Joh. 15. 5. *Without me ye can do nothing.* Except we have Spiritual Sap and Life from Christ, we can bring forth no true fruit, but are like a dead and withered Branch, that hath no life in it.

2. *What*

2. What that Life is that Christ gives to dead Sinners.

1. *The Life of Justification.* When we are united to Christ, the Sentence of Death by the Law is taken off. We use to say, that of a Malefactor, when the Sentence of Death is passed upon him, that he is a dead man: But if once a Pardon come, that makes him a living man, then he cannot be executed. Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore now no Condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.* There was a heavy Sentence of Condemnation passed upon us by the Law; but now we are in Christ, we are pardoned in Christ, and now there is no Condemnation. Now as Paul saith, Gal. 2. 20. *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*

2. *We have from Christ the Life of Sanctification, the life of Grace and Holiness too, whereby the Soul hath a Spiritual Inclination and Disposition to act towards God; according to that, Hebr. 8. 10. I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts. Ezek. 36. 26,27. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh, and give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes.*

The Preaching of the Life that Christ giveth, is to them that perish foolishness. Some are fit to make a mock at Life and Justification by the Blood and Righteousness of Christ: And so likewise at Conversion, at the infusing of Grace into the heart, wherby we come to live unto

God. But as these things are plainly revealed in the Scripture; so to them that believe, these things are precious.

3. Let us enquire what we are to understand here, by the Voice of the Son of God.

1. The Gospel may be called the voice of the Son of God, as it is an Instrumental means to make dead Souls to live. The Gospel is called, *The Word of Grace*, Acts 20. 32. *The Word of Christ*, Col. 3. 16. *The Word of Life*, Phil. 2. 16. By the Dispensation and Preaching of the Gospel, Christ conveyeth himself into our Souls. *The Letter, the Law killeth*; seeing we are sinners, the Law is *the ministration of death to us*, 2 Cor. 6. 7. It tells us we are dead men, cursed men, it revealeth the wrath of God due to us for our sins. *The Law, through our default, cannot give us Life*; because we have not a Righteousness that the Law requires in our selves: But it is the Gospel that reveals to us *the new way to Life*, that shews us an Attornement and Righteousness in another. We can neither be justified by the Law, nor be sanctified by it. We cannot be justified by it, because we cannot fulfil it. We cannot be sanctified by it, because it only commands us to obey, but giveth no new strength; now we have lost the Holiness we had in *Adam*. Tis the Gospel that reveals to us how we may be justified before God, and may have the Image of God renewed upon us.

But to make us spiritually alive, there must be more than a bare Declaration of the Gospel; many

many hear the Gospel Preached many years, and yet never hear the voice of the Son of God and Live: Therefore here is more to be understood.

2. *By the voice of the Son of God, is meant the Secret Efficacy and Power of the Spirit of Christ so put forth as to turn the heart to the Lord.* As the Lord Jesus did say to *Lazarus*, when he was Dead, *Lazarus* come forth, and at the same time put Life into him: So when the set time is come for the conversion of any of the Elect people, there goes forth such a Power of Christ, as to put Spiritual Life into them. Ministers may speak and spend their strength in calling to dead Souls to come forth, but except the Lord put in with them, so as to effect the work, men will still abide in death.

Object. *Hearing presupposeth Life, Therefore how is it said, That they that hear the voice of the Son of God shall live? Can they hear before they live?*

Answer, This hearing the voice of the Son of God, and living Spiritually, are both at the same time. As *Lazarus*, when Christ bad him come forth, he heard and lived at the same time. Christ speaking to the heart with such Power, as to turn the heart to himself; goes before Spiritual Life, in order of Nature, but not in order of Time. Conversion is a work of Spiritual Creation, and so is not like other things: The Lord saith live, and the Soul liveth.

4. Let us enquire what the Lord works upon a man dead in trespasses and sins, to make him live Spiritually.

I shall not stand to speak of what the Lord doth by way of *Preparation* for the Souls receiving Christ; this must be *supposed*, that the Lord doth set our sins in order before us, convince us of Sin and of Judgment to come: But the very thing by which we are translated from Death to Life, is the Lords *giving us his Spirit to unite us to Christ*, whereby we receive the Life of Justification and Sanctification from him. The Lord gives the *Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation*, Ephes. 1. 17. *God who commanded Light to shire out of Darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledg of the Glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor. 4. 6. The Sinner was convinced of his lost estate before, and now there comes a powerful Light into the heart to reveal Christ, so as to enable the Soul to see Christ held forth in the Promises, and to receive him. The Apostle saith, 1 Tim. 1. 15. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.* Now the Soul saith, It is so indeed; 'tis worthy of all acceptation: the Soul now is wrought by the Spirit to approve, and like this way of Salvation, and heartily close with it. Now the Understanding is enlightened, and the Will rectified, and brought to embrace Christ. It is the Lord that makes this change, *He worketh in us to will and to do*, Phil. 2. 13. Every one that

is converted receives Christ, Joh. 1. 12. *But to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believed on his Name.* Though it may be, that the Souls receiving Christ at first is scarce discerned; but afterwards by renewing acts of Faith upon Christ, and by the effects of Union with Christ, we may come to see that we have received Christ, and are made partakers of Spiritual Life. There is a certain *moment of time*, when a man hath Spiritual Life put into him; he heareth the voice of the Son of God and liveth: But the work is so secret and mysterious, that it is hard for us to say, that just such a day, such an hour, we heard the voice of the Son of God and lived. Though some may be able to know the time, yet not all that are made alive by Christ. But we find by degrees the acts and effects of Spiritual Life; whereby we may know, that we have heard the voice of the Son of God and live.

When we receive Christ, then we are made alive indeed: for wheras we were under the sentence of death, by the Law; now we are forgiven all trespasses, and have the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us: And those that receive this gift of Righteousness, are not only freed from Hell, but shall reign in life by Jesus Christ, Rom. 5.17.

When we truly receive Christ, we are sanctified also. Together with the Faith that the Lord gives us to receive Christ for our Justification, he also gives his Spirit to work in us a Principle of Holiness, and new obedience, that

we

we may be both in respect of Justification and Sanctification alive from the Dead.

Application.

Use 1. Here we may see the miserable estate that every man and woman is in, that hath not heard the voice of Christ. Brethren and beloved, do you believe this, that dead sinners are made alive by hearing the voice of the Son of God? Then those that never yet heard the voice of the Son of God, they are yet dead in Trespasses and Sins.

If you never yet heard the voice of Christ, then you are dead men; all your sins are upon you, you are under the sentence of death by the Law; and if you never come to hear the voice of the Son of God, this sentence of Death will be upon you for ever.

And if you never yet heard the voice of Christ, to put spiritual life into you, then you are dead also as to any Life of Grace and Holiness. Those works that you are ready to be proud of, and glory in, they are all but dead works; and you do not truly serve the living God.

But you will say, we hope we have heard the voice of Christ, we have heard many able Ministers, many good Sermons, we have had the Word opened to us.

Answer. This is a Priviledg indeed, to have the Word Preached to you; but it is not the voice of a man, nor nor of the Angels of Heaven, if they should speak to you, that can put

Spiritual

Spiritual Life into you, except withal you hear the voice of the Son of God.

Therefore, If you never yet heard the voice of Christ, to make the Preaching of the Gospel effectual to your Souls; I say unto every such person, as God said to *Abimilech*, Gen. 20. 3. *Thou art but a dead man*, thou art a Sinner, and the wages of Sin is Death; thou art a condemned man, and thou hast no Life of Holiness neither; Therefore consider your case and condition.

Examine your selves, Whether the Word Preached hath had that power upon your hearts to draw you to Christ, and to turn you from your Iniquities.

Objection. *If that we hear the Word Preached by men, yet you say, that except we hear the voice of the Son of God, we cannot live: then to what purpose should we attend upon the Preaching of the Gospel?*

Answer, It is your Duty to hear what God the Lord speaketh by his Servants and Ministers; and though the Word Preached cannot Convert you, without the Voice and Power of Christ; yet it may please the Lord, at one time or other, to make the Preaching of the Word effectual upon your hearts, as he hath done to others.

Use 2. *See the exceeding greatness of Christ's Power.* He is able to make dead Souls to live; he is able to quicken those who are dead in Trespasses and Sins; a work which neither Men nor Angels can do: Yea, know and take notice,

notice, That it is no labour, no difficulty to Christ to make dead Souls live: He can do it easily and suddenly, He can do it with a word, He can do it as easily as you or I can speak a word. The Text saith, *That the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.*

Use 3. Of Direction to those that have heard the voice of the Son of God, and are now quickened, and are made alive.

1. *Bless and praise the Lord;* stand and wonder at what the Lord hath done for you. If any of you had been dead, and in the Grave, and Christ had said to you as he did to *Lazarus*, come forth, and so you had been raised but from a bodily death, to live again, this had been a great wonder: But this is a far greater wonder. O! therefore bless the Lord, say this, my Soul was Dead and is alive. I was under the Sentence of Death for the Breach of the Law, and now I am pardoned. I was without any life of holiness, and now the Lord hath given me a new Heart, a new Spirit. Thus when I lay in my Blood, the Lord said unto me, Live.

2. *Love the Lord Jesus* who hath delivered your Soul from Death. Love him because he first loved you, and said to you, when you lay in your Blood, Live. Love him, and love the word of his Grace by which he quickened you. Never forget his Word, the Word of his Grace,

Grace, by which he hath quickned your Souls. Love his Word and Ordinances, wherein he hath put forth the Power of his Grace to your Souls.

3. *Trust in the Lord to perform all things for you.* If you have heard the voice of the Son of God and Live, then you have had experience of the Power of Christ indeed. Therefore trust in the Lord in all difficulties. Say as *David*, Psal. 62. 1. *Truly my Soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my Salvation.* Ver. 2. *My Soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him.* You can speak it by experience, that Power belongeth unto God, and that also unto the Lord belongeth Mercy. You have had experience of both, in his calling you out of darkness into his marvellous light; therefore wait upon him, and trust in him to perfect all that doth concern you both for Soul and Body.

Lastly, *Be willing to do or suffer any thing for Christ.*

1. *Be willing to live to him.* The Apostle shews that it is but reasonable that we should live unto the Lord, not only as we are Creatures; but also upon the account of Grace.

2 Cor. 14. 15. *Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them and rose again.* Those that live by Christ, it is but reasonable that they should live to him. We must not of all others, live to our selves; besides, our old obligation to obedience, which

which we owe to God, as our Creator and Sovereign Lord: Grace lays a further obligation upon us to live to him.

2. *Be willing to dye for him, if he call us to it.* Paul had heard the voice of Christ speaking from Heaven to him (as all that are called do, though not in such a manner as Christ spake to him) and so he was made alive; and now how precious was Christ to him? he was willing to suffer any thing for his Name and Glory, *Act. 21.13. I am ready, not only to be bound, but to dye at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus.* He was sensible that Christ had given him spiritual Life, and therfore thought it a small matter, to lay down his bodily Life, in a way of bearing witness to his Name.

S E R-

brotherhood, and to do all things in
with love and brotherly kindness.

Ver. 1. *He that hath received his Testimony, hath set to his Seal that God is True.*

SERMON III.

And the Word was made flesh.

John III. 33. *He that hath received his Testimony, hath set to his Seal that God is True.*

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THe words before going, John says, No Man received his Testimony, though he testify nothing but what he had seen and heard in Heaven: and no man received his Testimony: and yet here immediately it follows, that *He that hath received his Testimony says, that God is True.* *He that hath*; implying there was some that did receive it; that is none, few or none: None in comparison of those that did not receive it; some few there were that did receive it. And here in this Verse, John doth declare the Commendation of those that did receive Christ, and what matter of encouragement to those that do receive Christs Testimony: Why, he says, they do exceedingly Honour and Glorifie God; they do subscribe as it were with their Hand, and set their Seal.

to the Truth of God ; that what the Lord speaks, and Christ speaks, and what God the Father speaks, is Truth ; and in doing this, they Honour and Glorifie God by subscribing and setting to their Seal, *that God is True.* As he says, *he that set to his Seal that God is true, doth Testify of what is Truth.* But how doth it appear that the Spirit is given unto those that Testify of him ? You may see it cleared in the opening of the Proposition. So that the proposition is this ; taking up the words of the Text.

Propos. Whosoever be be that doth receive the Testimony of Christ, doth set to his Seal that God is True.

You heard before in the opening of the former clause, what we are to understand by the Testimony of Christ, and then what we are to understand of the receiving the Testimony of Christ. By the Testimony of Christ we are to understand the Gospel of Life and Salvation held forth to poor Sinners : that you heard cleared from Scripture ; and for the receiving of it, what is it to receive it ? it is not only a receiving it into the understandings, and also into the affections, and receiving it with some kind of Joy and Gladness ; but also a receiving it into the Heart and Soul in a way of Faith and Believing. Believing is receiving the Testimony of Christ. I shall not stand to speak of these things, but shall now shew you, that that Testimony that every believing Soul doth give of Jesus Christ, doth set to his Seal, *that God is true.*

First, To shew that God is Truth. Secondly, what we are to understand by this setting to the Seal that God is true. Thirdly, To shew by what, and wherein, and how it doth appear that every believing soul that doth receive the Testimony of Christ, doth believe that God is True.

First, *To shew you that God is True*, that God is true and faithful in his Word, in whatsoever he speaks in his Gospel : as that which the Evangelists in the Gospel speaks of in the Testimony of Christ is true. When God proclaimed his name by *Moses*, he says of him, *He is abundant in goodness and in truth*; he is as abundant in his truth (every way) as in his goodness. And in another place its said, *God is not as Man*, *that he should lye: bath he spoken it, and shall he not do it?* And so I might multiply Scriptures to that purpose ; the Truth of God is from everlasting to everlasting : whatsoever he speaks, it shall be; what he hath spoken with his mouth, he will fulfil. *Every man*, says the Apostle, *are Lyars: Let God be true and every man a Liar*: in respect of God it is even so. And so in the *New-Testament*, *God is a God that cannot Lye*. It cannot stand with his infinite Nature; He cannot Lye ; yet it is impossible for God to Lye. He must cease to be God, were it ever so.

But it must needs be so, Brethren, that God is a God of Truth : for God is the Author of all truth; He is the Fountain of Truth, and you know a Fountain cannot contain sweet waters and bitter; He is Light, and in him is no darkness.

ness at all ; He is Truth it self, and no Lye there can be no falsehood at all in him; He is the Author of Truth ; the Devil is the Author of Lyes, and the founder of them : the Devil is the Father of Lyes, and therefore God cannot be the Father of them, but he is the Author of T

But again, it cannot be that God should speak that which is not truth , which he doth not intend; for God is an unalterable God, an unchangeable God : He don't speak and unspeak again, but he is Immutable and unchangeable, the same to day, and forever, without any shaddow of turning. In our speaking there's change, and shaddow of turning; but there is no shaddow of change or turnings in God: He says not one thing, and intends another. If God should promise Life and Salvation unto all those that lay hold of Righteousness and Life, and then they fall short of it , here were change and shaddow of turning; but there's no shaddow nor turnings in God.

Again, God must needs be a God of Truth, because he loves Truth ; *Thou lovest Truth in the inward parts.* God loves truth in the Heart, and God loves Truth in the Lips too. *Blessed is the man in whose Lips is no guile.* See how God threatens to punish a Lyar : *there shall in no wise enter into the Holy place, any thing that defileth, or any thing that makes a Lye.* And so in another place, *without are Dogs, Idolaters, and Adulterers, and Liars.* See how the Lord also doth threaten the King of Iudah, that had

had made a Covenant with the King of Babylon, in *Ezekiel. 17. 13. 15, 16.* Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doth such things? &c. As I live, saith the Lord God, surely in the place where the King dwelleth that made him King, whose Oath he despised, and whose Covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of Babylon, he shall die for it. And it's a remarkable story of the King of *Hungaria*, King of the *Romans*: he entered into a solemn Covenant with the *Turks*, whereupon, a while after, the Pope by one of his Cardinals, persuaded that King of *Hungaria* to break his Covenant, and to come into his Country with an Army; and the *Turk* seeing his Army, with the Banner of Christ's Name upon it; he cried out, O Christ, come and take judgement on him that hath thus broken Covenant with the Lord; and the Lord did give Victory to the *Turk*, and he took the King and cut off his Head; and this for breach of Covenant. And so in other instances, says God, your Carcasses shall lye down in the Wilderness; and so in *1 Samuel 2. 30.* and Chapt. *3. 13.* See what course the Lord will take with the House of *Eli*, Wherefore I the Lord God of Israel, I said indeed, that thy House, and the House of thy Father should walk before me for ever: But now the Lord saith, be it far from me: for them that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed, &c.

Quest. Why, then it seems the Lord is not so faithful in his Word: for sometimes the

Lord doth not make good his Promises. *How then is he true and faithful in what he doth?* tho' this is not the business I principally intend; yet for answer, in a word:

Ans'w. The Promises that God makes unto particular persons or people, especially unto Temporal good things and Blessings, they are made conditionally, *viz.* *If they don't walk so and so: Or if they don't repent.* As now for example, That threatening made to *Niniveh*; it's said, *except Niniveh doth return*, that is the meaning of it; Tho' its not always express, yet it's always implied, That if they do not repent, they shall dye, or they shall be destroyed. So now, God promised the *Israelites* they should have the Land of *Canaan*, that is conditionally, to take heed how they walk before him, and commit no Idolatry; but now they continuing in Idolatry, the Lord fails them; why? because they did not walk uprightly before him, but sinned against him with their Idolatry. And also his Promise is, if they did put a difference between the precious and the vile, then I would do so and so; But now thou hast done so and so; and tho' I have said so, because you have not done so and so, you shall not enjoy the mercies I have promised. They are not always performed, because they are conditional; but God is true and faithful in what he promises.

But what are we to understand of the setting to the Seal? What is this same setting of the seal to it, that God is true?

Breifly, It signifies thus much, namely , a bringing, or giving a strong Witness that God is True; for the setting to the Seal, is not on- ly a promise by word subscribing, but also by setting of the Seal to a thing. See *Ni- hemiah 9. last Verse. Esther. 8. 8.* The King is making impression with his Seal upon the writing, for the enlargement of the *Jews*, and it's said, the Kings Seal no man may pluck off. You know it is ordinary, the Sealing to a thing is the confirming of a thing: Circumcision was as a Sign or Seal of strong Confirmation, that Righteousness should be had in a way of faith and beleiving: And says the Apostle, *Are not you the Seal of my Apostleship?* That is , yea are my Witness and strong Testimony, to evi- dence and clear, that I am an Apostle sent of God, because of the effects of that Ministry you see and find by me. And so in another place, *The Lord knoweth them that are his, having this Seal, that every one that Nameth the name of Christ should depart from iniquity.* Here is a double Seal, here is the Seal of Gods election, chusing from Eternity, *the Lord knows who are his;* but also more secret, *Let him that receiveth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.* But how is this an evi- dent demonstration that God is true ? why thus, in receiving of the Testimony of God, there's a strong evidence that God is True.

First, In that he doth now deny himself ; every Man and Woman that doth receive Christ by Faith, doth deny themselves; all a

mans own Righteousness, his own Services, or performances: He doth not look ever to be accepted of the Lord for any thing that he doth or can do: not that he neglects Duty and Services, and performances; but when he hath done all, yet all his hopes and expectations for any thing of whatsoever he hath done, he desires nothing but acceptance in Christs Righteousness: *for if a man will come after me, saith Christ, he must deny himself and follow me.* He must renounce all, look for no acceptance with God for all that ever he suffers, or can suffer: for the Name of God: The Soul will deny all, deny it self, its own Liberty, its name and credit, its Lite and all. Again,

Secondly, A man that doth receive the Testimony of Christ, as he doth deny all, so now he doth give up himself, and lay the weight of his eternal condition upon Christ. Says the Apostle, *I know in whom I have believed: and I am persuaded, and know that he is sufficient to keep whatsoever is needful for me. I have ventured my eternity for it, and upon it, and my Soul must sink if Christ don't take care of me, and save me for ever.* He renounces all his own righteousness, and lays the weight of his Soul upon Christ.

Thirdly, A man that doth receive the Testimony of Christ, hath set to his Seal, that God is true. He did set to his Seal that Christ is true, but how doth he set to his Seal that God is true? yes, for he whom God hath sent, speaketh the word unto you; Christ is sent of God, and

and he speaks nothing but what he had from God. Briefly by way of Application :

Use. 1. If God be a God of Truth, it doth concern every one of us to endeavour to be like unto God. God is a God of Truth, and what he speaks is Truth. God is a God of Truth that cannot lye, it's impossible for God to Lye.

Use 2. It's a word of encouragement to every one of us this day that are before the Lord, to receive the Testimony that God gives us, to beleive what Jesus Christ doth speak, because what he speaks is the Word of the Father, the Word of the God of Truth, and is that whereby you do exceedingly Honour and Glorify God. It's said of *Abraham*, He believed, and gave glory unto God. Who is there that would not say, he is willing to glorify God, Honour him; you would be willing to testifie to this truth, that God is truth; and if you had a Hundred Seals, or if it were to set a Thousand seals to it that God is Truth, you would do it. O receive the Gospel in its tenders, you that have not yet received it, and lay the weight of your Souls, your everlasting hopes, upon Christ and his Righteousness, and expect Salvation, and Righteousness, and Life, meerly for that the Lord hath called you hereunto; and here is encouragement, because you cannot Honour and Glorifie God more than in believing.

SERMON IV.

Hebrews XI. 6. The beginning of the Verse.

But without Faith it is Impossible to please him.

Having spoken somewhat largely concerning the Doctrine of Faith, from another Scripture, I shall desire a little to go on to back it. And Oh that the Lord would back it by his Spirit ; and therefore I have chosen this portion of Scripture.

Briefly a little for the Coherence.

The Apostle *Paul* (for most probably he was the Pen-man of this Epistle) having in the former Chapter exhorted these *Jews*, or *Hebrews*, to whom he wrote, to persevere, and to be constant in the Faith, taking an Argument from the danger of the contrary, in the latter end of the Chapter , *If any man draw back, or do not persevere, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him.* Now I say, having exhorted them to persevere in the Faith, both in the Doctrine of Faith , and in the Grace of Faith,

Faith, he comes in this Chapter to commend the Grace of Faith to them. And that,

First, By laying down a description of it; for says he, *This grace of Faith doth make those things that are absent (whether past or future) as if they were present; if we look by faith back upon the creation of the World, and see how the World was made out of nothing, Faith will help us to look upon it as present; and so we may look upon those things that are to come; and faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, whether past or to come.*

But then, Secondly, he commands Faith by the excellent effects of it, that have been found in the Faithful in all Ages, from the beginning of the World until the coming of Christ; for if you observe it, look upon the Chapter, and you will find that he gives instances and examples, both of those faithful that were before the Flood, and also of such as were after the Flood, to the giving of the Law; and then also of those faithful ones that lived after the Law until the Captivity; and then of those that lived after the Captivity until the coming of Christ: all these he instances in this Chapter. Now first, for these Faithful ones that lived before the Flood, and the effects of Faith in them; here he does lay down and mention three examples especially:

First, He does instance in the example of *Abel*, and of the effects of Faith in him.

Secondly, He doth instance also in faithful *Enoch*, and the Effects of his Faith.

And

And Thirdly, The example of *Noah*, and the effects of his Faith. And what was the general effect of their Faith? Why, the great and General effect of all their Faith was, that by their Faith they pleased God. Says he, first for *Abel*, at the 4th Verse; *Abel* *be offered up a Sacrifice by Faith that pleased God*; by Faith *Abel* offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than *Cain*, or a more pleasing Sacrifice than *Cain*; it was by Faith that his offering was pleasing unto God. And again, he instances in *Enoch*, *By Faith Enoch walked with God, and pleased God*; for so he says expressly at the latter end of the 5th Verse, that he had this Testimony, *that he pleased God*. And then for *Noah*, he also by his Faith pleased God. How does that appear? why, he found Grace and Favour with God; God instructed him to build an Ark, whereby he and his Family might be preserved in the time of the General Flood. He found Favour with God, and that was by Faith; for so the Apostle expresses it, verse 7. *By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen, as yet moved with fear prepared an Ark, &c.*

But now this Scripture that I have read unto you, it is from the commendation of the Faith of *Enoch*, *Enoch by Faith he pleased God*; for so saies the Apostle at the latter end of the 5th Verse, just before the Text, *before his translation he had this Testimony, that he pleased God*. He had this Testimony, where had he this Testimony? And where shall we find this Testimony concerning *Enoch*? The place to which the

Apostle

Apostle does here refer and relate to, is that in the 5 of *Genesis*, the 22, 23, 24. Verses. If you consult the place, you will find never a word spoken that *Enoch pleased God, not expressly*; it is said *Enoch walked with God, after he begat Methusalah, three Hundred Years, and begat Sons and Daughters: and all the days of Enoch were three hundred Sixty and Five Years; and Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him*. Where is here any word expressed that *Enoch pleased God*? Yet saies the Apostle in this place, *He had this Testimony, that he pleased God*? why, it must be in this place or no where; therefore it is no where expressly said that he pleased God. How then could the Apostle say here, that *he had a Testimony that he pleased God*? For answer, though it be not said in express terms that *Enoch pleased God*, yet here is that spoken for the substance of it, that is equivalent to it; for in that it is said, *He walked with God*, it holds forth that he pleased God; for can two walk together if they be not agreed, if they be not pleasing one to another? can *Enoch walk with God*, if God was not pleased with him? the very expressing of it again and again, that *Enoch walked with God*, it holds forth this Testimony, that *Enoch pleased God*. And again, the Lords taking of him to himself, in a more than ordinary way and manner, is a plain Testimony that he pleased God. Now saies the Apostle, *He had this Testimony before his Translation, that he pleased God; he walked with God, and God took him*. Here was

was a plain Testimony that he pleased God. Now this was by Faith, that *Enoch* pleased God; so the Apostle says, *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see Death*; and *He had this Testimony, that he pleased God*. And saies the Apostle, *This Faith is that whereby a Soul comes to please God*; and not only so, but is *that whereby God is only pleased; by Faith only God is pleased with a person, and without Faith it is impossible to please God*. The Apostle does not say here, that no man ever did yet please God without Faith; he does not only say, that no man alive does please God without Faith, nor no man that ever shall live in the World shall please God without Faith; no, but he speaks a greater word, *It is impossible that ever any man or Woman in the World should please God without Faith; without Faith it is impossible to please him*.

The words are a plain Proposition, and I shall take them as the Apostle lays them down: Namely,

Doctrine, That it is impossible for any Man or Woman ever to please God without Faith.

It does imply, indeed, that by Faith a Man or Woman does come to please God; for when he saies, *without Faith it is impossible to please God*, he does imply, that by Faith a man or Woman does please him; but it is only by Faith that a Man or Woman can please God.

Friends, this point may be of greater concernment than possibly some of you are aware of,

of; hereby the general mistake of many (if not of most) Christians, may be discovered, many, and the generality of Christians are ready to think that they please God with the performance of their Duties day by day; they call upon the Name of God, and they are frequently attending upon the Word of God; and they do desire also to live uprightly, and to walk conscientiously in their callings, &c. And this is the way whereby they think to please God: I do not speak against these things; but I say, if this be the way to please God, then why doth the Apostle say here, that *without Faith it is impossible to please him*? then it is not possible by my Prayers, nor by all the Duties and Services that I can perform, nor by all my upright and close walking in my conversation; no saies he, *when you have done all you can, if you fall short of this Faith, you cannot please God; without Faith it is impossible to please him*. Hereby, I say, Christians may see their general mistake whereby they may be mistaken, and it is about a matter of very great concernment, about pleasing or displeasing God; and again, it is of concernment also to direct us and set us in a right way, whereby we may come to please God indeed; well then, to enter upon the point (through the Lords assistance) I shall desire for the prosecution of it, to speak to these four or five particulars:

1. To shew you what it is that the Apostle here means by pleasing God, when he saies, that *without Faith it is impossible to please God*.

2. That

2. That this pleasing of God is a matter of very great concernment, that the Apostle intimates, when he speaks of it so as he does, that it is a most desirable thing for a Man or Woman to please God.

3. What is that Faith without which it is impossible to please God, and by which a man or woman doth come to please God? That is worth the inquiring after.

4. Shew you, that by Faith (though a Man or Woman may have many failings) yet by Faith, he comes to please God.

5. And Lastly, To shew you, That *without Faith it is utterly impossible to please God*; whatever Man or Woman doth in this world besides, yet if he fall short of this Faith he cannot please God.

1st. Then, *What is this same pleasing of God that the Apostle here speaks of?*

I Answer, By pleasing of God, we are not to understand meerly God's approving a thing; God doth approve of the Creatures that he hath made, and approves of them for good; the Creatures that came out of Gods hand, for the substance of them, they are good; when God had made the World, he looked back and did review all the creatures that he had made, and he did declare and pronounce that they were all very good; this is an approbation of the creatures that he had made: but this is not such a pleasing of God as the Apostle here speaks of; the substance of all the creatures in themselves are good, the very

vils in the substance of them are good in themselves. And again, the actions and works that Men and Women do, they may sometimes be good for the substance of them, and yet notwithstanding God may not be pleased with them. *He hath shewed thee, Oh man (Micah 6.8.) what is good, to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.* The substance of those Actions, God doth approve of them, and yet notwithstanding for the manner of doing them, God may not be pleased. Well, then positively,

You will say, What is this same pleasing of God by what we do? or when may God be said to be pleased with the things that a Man or Woman doth? Namely, in short, for I must not inlarge; When as the Lord hath a Gracious respect unto the things that a person doth, when he have a gracious respect to his Duties and Services, and also doth graciously accept of them, and take a kind of complacency and delight in them, then is he well-pleased with them. As now for example, you read of *Abel* in *Genesis 4. 4, 5.* He went and offered a Sacrifie unto God, and so did *Cain* too; but saies the Holy-Ghost, *The Lord had respect to Abel and to his Offering, but he had no respect to Cain and to his Offering.* God saw what *Cain* did too, in offering, and the offering might be good and acceptable in it self, but being offered up by *Cain*, God had not respect to *Cain* nor to his offering; he did not accept of it as performed and done by him; so when God hath

hath not only a gracious respect to the duties and services a man performs, but does graciously accept of them, with a kind of complacency, he smells a sweet favour in them, then he is pleased with them: As it is said concerning Noah's Offering, in *Genesis 7. 21*. Noah, after he came out of the Ark, he offered a Sacrifice to God of the clean Beasts that he had in the Ark with him; and it is said, God smelted a sweet favour of rest in his nostrils from that Sacrifice; God had not only a gracious respect to it, and looked with a gracious aspect upon it, but God did take a kind of delight, and favour, and relish in it; as a man doth delight in that he smells a sweet favour in; it is said, the Lord smell'd a sweet favour of Rest, a sweet smell came up into his nostrils from Noah's sacrifice; The Truth is (Brethren) a Man or Woman may sometimes do those very things that God requires, (I pray mark it) I say, a Man or Woman may perform those very duties that God requires, and yet God may not smell a sweet favour in them, take no delight nor complacency in them, nor have no respect to them: As now for example, you know the Lord anointed *Jehu* to be King over *Israel*, *2 Kings 9*. You shall find when the Lord anointed him by his Prophet, it was for this very end and purpose, that he should go and Destroy all the House of *Ahab*, and cut them all off; well, *Jehu* went and performed the work; one would think this was pleasing to God, for he did the very thing that God required

required; and yet I pray look into *Hosea 1.4.* You shall see what a Testimony the Holy Ghost gives of *Jebe* concerning the Work he did, *And the Lord said unto the Prophet, call his Name Fezreel: for yet a little while, and I will avenge the Blood of Fezreel upon the House of Jebe, &c.* I will be avenged, saies God, for that Blood; why, did not *Jebe* do that which God did expressly require of him, in cutting off the House of *Ahab*? And yet saies the Lord, I will be avenged for that Murder that *Jebe* Committed. Why so? Truly *Jebe* did not do it in that manner that was pleasing unto God, for *Jebe* had his own ends in what he did; he made account of cutting off the House of *Ahab*, that his own Kingdom might be better established, and therefore he still maintained the Calves that *Jeroboam* had set up; and therefore saith the Lord, *I will avenge the Blood of Fezreel upon the House of Jebe.* And saies the Lord, in *Isaiah 1. 13, 14.* When he speaks concerning the Sacrifices, Offerings, and Services which he himself had appointed, *Bring no more vain Oblations; Incense is an Abomination to me; your new Moons and Sabbaths, and solemn Assemblies I cannot away with.* Why, had not God expressly appointed these things? yes; yet saies God, *Your new Moons and appointed Feasts my Soul hateth, they are a trouble to me, I am weary to bear them; and when you spread forth your hands, saies God, I will bide my Eyes; and when you make many prayers, I will not bear you.* Why, were not these the things that God had

had required and commanded ? yet you see God was not pleased with them; but now when the Lord doth look with a gracious respect upon a mans Services and performances , and also doth graciously accept them with complacency and delight, this is now to please the Lord by what we do. Well, this is the first thing ; you see what is meant by pleasing of God.

2. Now then to come to the second, That this pleasing of God is a very desirable thing ; it is of great concernment for a Man or Woman to please God.

What can a man or woman desire to do more in this World, than to please God ? this indeed is implied here in the Text, he speaks of it as a thing very desirable, *Without Faith it is impossible to please God.* To do that which is so desirable; if it were not desirable, what should a man or woman need to care whether he please God or no ? but the Apostle speaks of it as a great thing, *without Faith it is impossible to please God.* Brethren, when a man or woman doth perform a Duty or Service, when he hath done it, if he do not please God in it, this is matter of very great sadness to such a Soul, or it should be so ; you know how *Cain* took it, he brought an Offering, *Genesis 4.* of the fruits of the Ground, unto God, but God was not pleased with it ; *God had respect to Abel, and to his Offering ; but to Cain and his Offering God had not respect.* Well how did *Cain* take it ? He was not able to bear it to his countenance

nance fell: Gods accepting of *Abels* offering and not *Cains*, it went to the Heart of him, his Countenance fell, and thereupon he grew malicious against his Brother, and at last he slew him; it was such a dreadful thing to him, that God should not accept of his Sacrifice as well as his Brothers. And you shall see King *Saul*, though but a wicked man, yet when God did refuse to hear his Prayers, and was not pleased with them, saies he, *I am sore distressed*, in *1 Sam. 28. 15*. And he goes to a Witch, who raised up (as he thought) *Samuel* to him, and *Saul* answered, *I am sorely distressed, the Philistines make War against me, and God is departed from me; and he answereth me no more, neither by Prophets, nor by Dreams, &c. I am sorely distressed*. And Brethren, what is that which the people of God do so much desire in this world, that they are Ambitious of it, as the main thing of their desire in the World? It is, that they may please God, see the Apostles expression, *2 Cor. 5. 9*. *Wherfore we Labour*, saies he, the word signifies we are Ambitious, it is an emphatical word, we desire ambitiously, we do earnestly endeavour, as an ambitious man doth after Honour; *wherfore we Labour*: But the word is a stronger word, we labour with might and main, we make it our very ambition that we may be accepted of him, or that we may please God; it is the highest degree of the desire of our Souls, we are ambitious for that, that we may please God, and that God may be pleased with us, and accept of our services. G 3 But

But more particularly, to shew you in some particulars what a desirable thing it is to be found pleasing of God; and to have our services accepted of him. As

1. Is it not a desirable thing for a Man or Woman to be reconciled to God, and to have God reconciled to them, and so to have peace with God? Now, when God comes to accept of a mans duties and services, it is an Argument that God is reconciled to him, and at peace with him; for before reconciliation, every Man and Woman in the World is an enemy unto God. Now, if any one should come and offer Service to you, and you know he hath enmity in his mind against you, you will not accept of any thing he does, though he pretend never so fairly. Now when God comes really to accept of a Mans services and performances, it is an Argument God is at peace with him, and is not that a most desirabe thing?

2. Is it not a desirable thing for a man or woman to have libetty to make use of the creatures that God gives him, with joyfulness of Heart, that he may rejoice in what he doth make use of, and partake of? Now, when a Man or Woman comes to know that his Services are accepted of God, and that he hath pleased God in what he hath done, truly then he may go his way, as I remember *Solomon* speaks to that purpose, *Eccles.* 9. 7. *Go thy way, eat thy Bread with joy, and Drink thy drink with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy Work; God is pleased with what you do.* Ay, now you have

have cause to go and rejoice in what you do enjoy, now you may go and eat and drink with gladness, with a merry heart; it's true, the men of the World can be jovial in their Cups, eating and drinking, and carousing, and none seem to be so merry and jovial as they are, but they have no cause for it; it is just like a Condemned person, that may be jovial, and eating and drinking, and he know not how soon he may be called to Execution, this is the case of every Man and Woman in the World, if God do not accept of their Works: But now saies *Solomon, Go thy way, eat thy Bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thy works.*

3. Is it not a desirable thing to have the Creatures ready to be serviceable and officious to a man or woman? that there is never a Creature in the World but is ready to be Officious and Serviceable to him; though possiby they may seem to be averse, and contrary, and cross to him, yet they are all Serviceable and Officious to him; to have every thing turn to good to a Man or Woman, whatever any Creature do to him, it turns all to his good, though the Creature may intend otherwise. The wicked men may intend to persecute, and persecute them as Enemies, but when a man or woman please God, and his ways please God, all his Enemies shall be made his Friends, *Proverbs 16. 7. When a Mans ways please the Lord, he maketh his Enemies to be at peace with him.* They shall be Friends to him, they

shall do Offices and services of Friendship and kindness to him, though possibly against their wills; all the creatures shall be officious and serviceable to them, and they shall not be able to do them any hurt: what a desirable thing is this?

4. Is it not a desirable thing for a man or woman to have an audience of all their prayers in Heaven? for God to be ready to hear our requests and petitions that we put up to him? is not this a desirable thing? You will say, Oh that I were but sure that God did but hear any one Prayer that ever I made, what a desirable thing is this! now those whose ways are pleasing to the Lord God, do hear their prayers, *They have access to the Throne of Grace with boldness, to find grace and mercy to help in the time of need, Heb. 4. 16.* and mark the Apostles expression, in *1 John 3. 22.* *And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him.* Why so? because we keep his Commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. If we be sure we do those things that are pleasing to God; Now, saies the Apostle, we know that whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, we have now an audience of our prayers and petitions in Heaven; Oh! what a desirable thing is this!

5. Is it not a desirable thing for a man or woman to be a Favourite in the Court of Heaven? to be in special favour with the King of Heaven? you count it no small matter to be a Favourite in the Kings Court, to be in favour with the King; you count it a very desirable

able thing; Truly to be a favourite in the Court of Heaven is much more desirable; to be in favour with the great King of kings; I tell you the favour of God in Heaven, is as Life to a mans Soul; *David* could say it, that knew it by experience, in *Psalm. 30. 5.* *In thy favour is Life;* nay, he adds a greater word than that, in *Psalm. 63. 3.* *Thy loving kindness is better than life.* There is nothing in the world to a Man better than life; but to know that a man or Woman is in favour with God, he hath that which is better than life. Brethren and Friends, there are but two great things that a Man or Woman should desire in this World, which are the general and comprehensive of all things to be desired; one is, to enjoy peace with God, and the favour of God here; and the other is to enjoy the favour, and see the face of God in Heaven hereafter: What can a man desire more than to be at peace with God, and have the favour of God whilst he live, and then to know that he shall see and enjoy the face and presence of God for ever in Glory? Here is as much as can be desired; and these two things we should look after: Now here is one of them, To know that God is well pleased with a poor Creature; now such a person is a Favourite of Heaven, and he may be sure of it; if he be in favour with God here, then he shall see the face of God, and enjoy the presence of God hereafter: That is the 5th.

6. And Lastly, to add but that, Is it not a desirable thing for a Man or Woman to be able

able to look Death in the face with comfort, when Death comes to stare him in the face ? when he shall have a sentence of Death past upon him ? What would you then desire above all the things in this World ? what ? not a great Estate ; not this and that that you can think of in the World ; but Oh that I might have the Favour of God ! and that I might know that God is well pleased with me, &c. Then a Man or Woman may look Death in the face, and may draw near to God with a holy Boldness ; as I remember *Hezekiah*, when he had the sentence of death upon him, in *Isa. 38. 3.* *Lord*, saies he, *Remember how I have walked before thee in Truth, and with a perfect heart.* He could appeal to God, that his ways were pleasing to him, and now he could resign up his Soul to him, though he was troubled that he had not finished the Work that he had to do in the World ; and so he could have desired to live longer ; and upon his prayer the Lord did reverse the sentence of Death that was upon him ; yet when he had the Sentence, see how he took it, *Lord*, saies he, *remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart* ; that is, the things that he had been doing, had been pleasing to the Lord : So a Man or Woman whose ways pleased God whilst he lived in the World, when he comes to die he may look Death in the face with comfort. What a desirable thing then is it for a man or woman to please God in what he doth ? That is the Second thing propounded, that

That to please God is a most Desirable thing.

3. But in the Third place, you will, say, what is that Faith whereby a man or woman comes to please God?

Truly it is Faith that is the principle, and ground, and Foundation, whence a man, and his Works, and Services, and Performances come to be pleasing to God. A Man or Woman may be diligent in the performance of Duties and Services, and yet God may not be pleased with them: As for example, take two persons that come and joyn together in prayer, they pray the same Prayer, or two Persons that give Alms, they perform the very same Duty, the one gives as much alms as the other, and yet what the one doth may be accepted with God, and pleasing to him, and the other not; whence comes the difference? One doth it in Faith, and the other not. *Abel* and *Cain* brought their offerings to God, God had respect to *Abel* and his Offering, and God had not respect to *Cain* and his Offering; what was the ground of the difference? saies the Apostle, *By Faith Abel offered a more acceptable Sacrifice than Cain.* Well, but what Faith is it then whereby a Soul, and his Duties, and Services come to be pleasing unto God?

Ans^w. Brethren, do not mistake your selves, it is not that Faith whereby a man or Woman gives his consent to, and believes all that is written in the Scriptures, all that is revealed in the Gospel concerning Christ; a man or woman

woman may believe all this, and yet this is not the Faith whereby he comes to be accepted; as you know, the Devils believe all this, and yet are not accepted; So a man or Woman may believe all that is revealed in the Gospel, and yet never please God. But what Faith is it whereby a Man, and his Duties and performances come to please God? and without which it is impossible to please God? Briefly, there is a three-fold Faith required, for the acceptance of a mans services and performances with God, that God may be pleased with them. Mind it, I pray, for it is a thing of great concernment, and possibly that which very few have considered.

1st, There is required saving Faith in Christ, that which we call justifying Faith; such a believing in Christ whereby a Soul comes to be in Christ, and Christ in the Soul; whereby Christ becomes the life of the Soul, the very principle of Life in the Soul; a justifying saving Faith in the habit, the principle of Faith, the grace of Faith infused into the heart, whereby a Soul comes really to be united to Christ, and have an Interest in him; to be in Christ, as you know the Scripture frequently speaks; I shall not stand to give you Scriptures for that; you see, Brethren, here, how *Abel* and how *Enoch* came to please God, it was by Faith. What Faith? It was this true Justifying Faith, this Faith in Christ that was to come; for it was by their Faith in Christ that they came to be accepted, and their Offering was accepted

accepted and pleasing unto God ; by Faith *Abel* was accepted, and his Offering and Sacrifice was accepted : *Cain* he offered his Sacrifice, but it was not accepted, because he had not this justifying Faith. *Enoch* he pleased God, and whence was it ? It was by his Faith ; and saies the Apostle thereupon, *he had his Testimony that he pleased God* ; it was by his Faith, his justifying Faith in Christ, whereby he came to be accepted ; his person was accepted of God, and consequently his services came to be accepted of God ; a man or woman must first have a principle of Life, before he can live a Spiritual Life ; now Christ is a Christians life, and how comes Christ to be the Life of a Christian ? Namely, by his Faith, when he comes to believe in Christ, then Christ is his Life, the principle of his life ; the Spirit of Christ now is in the Soul : that is a plain word, which the Apostle hath, in *Rom. 8. 9.* *If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* And saies Christ, in *John 15. 5.* *As the branch cannot bring forth Fruit of it self except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me.* And without me (mark) *without me ye can do nothing.* Nothing that is pleasing to God ; the word *without me*, holds forth, not so much without Strength from Christ, though that is true too ; but the word signifies properly in the Original, without me, that is separated from me, not united to me ; that is the word in the *Greek*, just as when a Branch is cut off from the Vine, the Branch cannot bring forth Fruit without the

ful disputations ; for one believeth that he may eat all things, another who is weak eateth Herbs, Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not ; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth, for God hath received him. And again, at verse 5. One man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike. What then ? Let every Man be fully perswaded in his own mind, if he do venture to eat any kind of Meats, let him be fully and clearly perswaded in his own mind that he may do it, and then he eats in Faith ; and if he do not observe those days, if he be fully perswaded in his own mind, then he doth it in Faith ; in the two last Verses he calls this Faith. *Hast thou Faith ? Have it to thy self before God. Hast thou Faith ?* that is, hast thou a perswasion that it is lawful for thee to eat any kind of meats, or it is Lawful for thee to forbear the Observation of those Days ? *Hast thou Faith ? have it to thy self.* But mark, *Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing that he alloweth, and he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of Faith.* *He that doubteth, that is, he that questioneth whether it be lawful for him to eat this kind of meat or no ; he that doubteth whether he shall do well to observe this day or no ; He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of Faith.* That is, he is not fully perswaded in his own mind ; for whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin, whatsoever is not of that perswasion that it is according to the Will of God, or not contrary

contrary to the Will of God, if he do it without that perswasion, then it is not of Faith, and so is a damnable sin; though the thing be Lawful in it self, yet if he doth the same thing doubtingly, it is a damnable sin that he commits; without this Faith, this perswasion in his Mind, that what he doth is according to the Will of God: and this Faith is requisite to the pleasing of God. So here in the instance before us in *Abel*, and also in *Enoch*; *Abel* pleased God by offering up a Sacrifice, he had this Faith, not only a Justifying Faith, but he had this Faith, he was perswaded that what he did offer up in Sacrifice, was according to the Will of God; and so *Enoch* he walked with God, and had this Testimony, *that he pleased God*; that in the course of his Life, the steps of his Life was according to the Will of God; he walked with God; the actions that he did he was perswaded was according to the Will of God, and thus he pleased God, and this is a Second Faith that is required to the pleasing of God.

3 dly. There is another Faith that is required further to the pleasing of God, without which, though I be a Believer, and have a justifying Faith, and though I be perswaded that what I do is according to the Will of God, yet I may not please God in what I do, except there be another Faith, which is this, Namely, an actual Exercise of the principle and habit of Faith in the Duties that we perform; all our Duties must be done with an act of Faith; it is not sufficient that a man or woman be a believer,

liever, and do go about this thing and that thing, and run away with this Notion, that he pleases God in what he doth; but it is required that he must actually exercise Faith in what he doth. As for example, for Prayer, a man or Woman that is a believer goes to prayer, and he is perswaded in his conscience that what he pray's for is according to the Will of God, but this is not enough; but if his prayer please God, he must put forth a fresh act of Faith in his Prayer; what he asks for he must ask in Faith; *Whatsoever ye shall ask in Prayer, believing, saies Christ, ye shall receive.* Tho' a man be a believer yet he must believe stil and in *Jam. x. 5, 6.* *If any man lack Wisdom, let him ask it of God, &c.* But let him ask it in Faith; though he be a believer, yet let him ask in Faith, for if he ask without acting his Faith it is nothing; it is not pleasing to God; he must act Faith in his Prayer: and so for hearing the Word, a believer comes to hear the Word, and what he hears he is perswaded it is according to the Will of God; well, but is this enough? no, he must act Faith in hearing the Word, or else it will be unprofitable to him; saies the Apostle, in *Hebrews 4. 2.* *The word Preached did not profit them, not being mixt with Faith in them that heard it.* There must be an act of Faith in hearing the Word; we must mix Faith in hearing the Word, we must act Faith in all our duties & performances. So far as we are wanting in acting & exercising of Faith in what we do (the Lord help us to mind these things) so far forth our Services are defective

in pleasing of God ; and so I might instance in other things, as in giving of Alms, and other things ; and so, if you observe it, *Abel* was not only a Believer, and had the Faith also of perswasion that what he did offer was according to the Will of God ,ay, but *Abel* went further also, when he pleased God in his Sacrifices; in all his Sacrifices that he offered up, he did act Faith; and so by his acting of Faith, being a believer, his Offerings and Sacrifices were acceptable to God ; and *Enoch*, our present example before us, he was a believer , and was perswaded that what he did was according to the mind of God; but he walked with God, that is, he did act Faith in all his services that he did, in the steps of his Walking. He pleased God in his Walking, which must be by Faith, by acting of Faith in his Duties and Services, and walking with God, by that means he came to please God. It is not enough, Brethren, that I have a principle of Faith in me , that I do believe in Christ, and that what I do I am perswaded is according to the Will of God, this is not enough to please God in the Duties and Services that I perform ; but I must exercise Faith in the duties and services that God requires of me. Says the Apostle *Paul*, in *Gal.7.2, 20.* *I am crucified with Christ.* How did he know that ? saies he, *Christ lives in me* : there was a principle of Life ; and saies he, *the life that I live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God.* *Paul* had not only Christ in him as

a principle of Life, but *Paul* did also act from that principle of Life ; *The Life that I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God.* As for example, a natural man that hath a Soul in his Body , hath a principle of natural Life ; but this is not enough ; but now to every natural action of Life that he puts forth, there must be an influence from that principle of Life, or else he cannot act ; so though Christ be a principle of spiritual life in us, yet notwithstanding a Man or Woman must act spiritually, he must derive Strength, and Virtue, and influence from Christ, to every duty and service that he performs , to make it acceptable to God; it is not else a Spiritual Action.

This is now the Faith that is required in every Man and Woman in the World that would please God; and without this Faith it is impossible to please God. I pray mind it, though I cannot come to the Application now, yet remember it, and observe it, possibly you may think your selves what may be reduced from it ; I say, without this Faith it is impossible to please God: but now with this Faith, though our performances and services be defective, yet we come to please God in doing of them.

Quest. You will say, how shall we be sure of that, that whatsoever I do, being a believer, and acting Faith in it ; how may I be sure that

that I please God in what I do? possibly here may be a great Temptation that some may be exercised with; Whether may I venture upon it, and be perswaded in my Soul that I please God in what I do, acting and exercising Faith in it? shall I speak briefly to that which is the 4th. thing propounded, Namely,

Answe. 4th. That by Faith (though a Man or Woman have many failings) yet by Faith they do please God, though it be impossible without Faith to please him. How doth this appear? briefly in three or four words:

1. From the example of all the believers that ever have been in the World; all the faithful that have been in the World have pleased God by their Faith; there was never any one Believer in the World that did act Faith, but did please God in it; and if so, then we may be confident of it, that it is a sure and certain thing, that by Faith we come to please God. Look into the Catalogue of Believers, the Faithful in all Ages, read over the 11th of the *Hebrews* at your leisure, and you shall see that all of them did please God by their Faith. *Abel* he pleased God by his Faith, *Enoch* pleased God by Faith, and *Noah* pleased God by Faith, these were before the flood; afterward *Abraham* by Faith pleased God, for he was the Friend of God; *Isaac* and *Jacob* were faithful, and they pleased God; they might have their failings, and infirmities, and weaknesses, as *Noah* had, he was overtaken with drinking of Wine; and so the rest had their

weaknesses ; but for all that, they pleased God by their Faith , God overlookt their infirmities; and *Abraham* though he was a faithful Man, yet he had sometimes a tang of unbelief ; as when he went a great while without a Son; but yet God overlookt that, and he was pleased with *Abraham* still. So by Faith *Sarab* conceived, it pleased God to give her conception when she was 90 Years old ; she had her infirmities and weaknesses, she told a Lye in the hearing of the Angel ; but yet for all that she pleased God ; and so I might instance in others *David* pleased God; by Faith; *David* had his failings, and did sometimes displease God ; but yet by his Faith he did please God : And so look upon all those that have been believers, by their acting and exercising of of Faith, they have all of them come to please God; and therefore we may take it up for a general conclusion, and may be confident of it, that by Faith we shall please God.

2. The Holy-Ghost doth testifie in the Scripture again and again, that a man or woman by Faith doth live; What Life ? not a natural, but a Spiritual life. Now to live, is not only to have the life of Justification, and the life of Sanctification ; but to live, is to have the favour of God, to have God pleased with a person, that is to live ; saies *Abraham* to God in the 17th of *Genesis*, *Ob that Ishmael might live in thy Sight* ; what did he mean by that ? what, that his Life might be lengthned out ? No, but that he might find favour in thy Sight ; and saies

saies the Prophet, in *Psal. 30. 5.* *In thy favour is life.* And so in *Isaiah 6.55.* *Hearken unto me, and your Soul shall live;* that is, you shall please God, and be accepted of God. Now then, this is frequent in Scripture, that all that are Believers do live: *The just shall live by Faith,* both the *Old Testament* and *New-Testament* bear witness to it; the same thing is in the *Old-Testament, Habakkuk 2. 4.* and repeated again in the new, *Hebrews 10. 38.* *The just shall live by Faith;* therefore it is out of doubt and Question.

3dly, By Faith a Soul comes to have the guilt of sin taken away; I pray, what is that whereby a Man or Woman doth displease God? Namely, by his Sin; guilt doth displease God. Now then, Faith is a means and instrument to take away that which is displeasing to God, to take away the guilt of Sin. In *Acts 10. 43.* saies Peter there to *Cornelius*; *To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.* And so in Chapter *13. 38, 39.* *Be it known unto you, therefore, men and Brethren, that through this man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believed are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses.* By believing on him, we come to receive remission of sins. And so in *Acts 26. 18.* *That they might receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified through Faith which is in me.* Now then, if so be that all believers, all

that have Faith in Christ, and do exercise their Faith in Christ, be justified from the guilt of sin, then they are freed from all that makes them displeasing to God; then by Faith they come to please God, because by Faith the guilt of sin is removed, which is the matter of Gods displeasure.

4tby and Lastly, to have done: By Faith a Man or Woman comes to please God, because by Faith, now, the very heart, which is a fountain of uncleanness, comes to be made clean; this is the only way to have our hearts purified and cleansed: *Purifying their hearts by Faith*, saies the Apostle, *Acts 15. 9.* so in *1 Timothy 1. 5.* saies the Apostle there, *Out of a pure Heart, and a good Conscience, and Faith unfeigned.* Faith unfeigned is the means whereby the Conscience and the Heart is purified; and truly hence it is that believers are called clean; all that have Faith in Christ, and do exercise their Faith in Christ, they are all pure, and every thing is clean to them, *Titus 1. 15.* *To the pure all things are pure;* Who doth he mean by pure? mark now by the contrary, *But unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure, but their very conscince is defiled.* By Faith now, a mans heart comes to be pure, which is the Fountain of all his actions, all that he performs and does, it must come from the Heart; if the heart be clean, if the Fountain be clean, then the water that flows from the Fountain is clean: so now, the Heart being purified by Faith, now the Actions

actions come to be pure in the sight of God, through Christ. *To a believer everything is pure*, all that he meddles with and undertakes, if he doth act Faith in it, he pleaseth God: So now, you have seen the 4th thing opened, how we may be sure that by Faith we come to please God.

Now there is a further question remaining, But may not a Man or Woman please God without Faith, by doing the thing that God hath commanded? as now to pray, and perform duties, to walk uprightly, &c? As the generality of the World do think that this is the way and means to please God. I do not deny but we should do those things, and the things themselves as to the substance of them, are pleasing to God; but yet still, *without Faith it is impossible to please God*. How that appears, follows to be spoken to in the next place, and then come to the Application.

But thus much shall suffice for the present.

SERMON

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SERMON.

SERMON V.

Hebrews XI. 6.

*But without Faith it is impossible to please
Him.*

YOU have heard the dependance of these Words upon the foregoing ; we came directly to open the Proposition as it lay before us in the Words.

Doct. That without Faith it is impossible for any Man or Woman alive ever to please God. We have shewn you first what it is for a Man or Woman to please God. Secondly, we have proved to you, that this pleasing of God is a matter of very great concernment ; it is a thing very desirable for a Man or Woman to be found pleasing God. And then in the third place, we came to enquire what Faith that is without which it is impossible to please God. And then fourthly, we came to clear it up to you, that by Faith a Soul doth please God. Thus far we have gone.

5. Now we come in the fifth place to give you

you some demonstrations, to make it evident to you (if the Lord please to set in with it) that it is impossible for any Man or Woman ever to please God without Faith: It is not only said here, that without Faith a man hath not pleased God, or without Faith no man ever shall please God, but he speaks a greater word, *without faith it is impossible to please God.* This is such a thing, that it will hardly enter into the hearts of men and women to be perswaded of it. What! not please God by doing what God requires! why, if I be diligent and faithful in my calling, doth not that please God! if I perform the Duties that God requires doth not that please God! if I give much in a way of charity, perform good works, and be given to Alms-deeds in relieving the poor Saints of Christ, is not this pleasing unto God! if I suffer for the Truths sake, doth not this please God! why, do but observe and consider what the Apostle here saith, *without faith it is impossible to please God.* And consider also what the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. 13. 3. says he, *Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, yet all is nothing without charity; without Love: and whence comes this Love, but from Faith? it is Faith that worketh Love.* Now if the Apostle say, it is impossible to please God without Faith, then certainly this is a Truth, whether we can believe it or no; it is a Truth notwithstanding all that can be objected against it. It is impossible, mark the word, when he saies impossible

sible, he doth not mean, that it is a very hard and difficult thing, that which may come to pass with a great deal of difficulty, as sometimes that is meant by impossible in Scripture-phrase, as in *Mark 10. 27.* says Christ to them, *With men it is impossible.* Impossible, that is, very hard, very difficult; but now to please God without Faith, is not only impossible with such an impossibility, but it is impossible so as it opposes God in his determinate Counsel, *Without faith it is absolutely impossible to please God:* Such an impossibility as the Apostle speaks of in *Heb. 6. 4.* *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, &c. if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance:* It is absolutely impossible, it is beyond Gods determination. So in *Heb. 10. 4.* *It is impossible that the blood of Bulls and of Goats should take away sin:* It is impossible that all the blood of all the creatures under Heaven should take away the guilt of sin. So here, without Faith it is impossible for a man or woman to please God, absolutely impossible. Let me now give you two or three demonstrations to make it evident and apparent in every mans Conscience, I hope, through the assistance of the Spirit of God: And O that the Lord would persuade us of the truth of this, That it is impossible to please God without Faith.

First, Because all that ever an unbelieving man or woman doth or can do, is all for self, and not for God; and is it possible then to please

please God, when he does nothing at all, not one thing for God, but all for self, every thing for self? every duty that he performs is all for self; every unbeliever is just *Judas* like, in *John 12. 6*. *Judas* was a Thief, and had the Bag, and bare what was put therein; he had Christs Bag, and the Disciples Bag, ay, but he had another Bag of his own; so every unbeliever hath a Bag, he seems to have a Bag for God and for Christ, but he hath a Bag for self, and he puts all into that Bag: He may seem to do a great deal for God, he may pray much, and frequently and earnestly; he may read the Word very much, and attend very often upon the Word Preached, he may be frequent in the ordinary duties of the Worship and Service of God, nay, let me say further, he may be taken up in extraordinary duties too, as Fasting, and Prayer, and the like, and yet still all for self, and nothing at all for God. Look into *Zach. 7. 5, 6*. saith the Lord there, *Speak unto all the people of the Land, and to the Priests, saying, when ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even unto me? And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did ye not eat for your selves, and drinke for your selves?* All for self. Thus it is with every unbeliever, whatever he doth he doth for self, he is compassed about in the Circle of self, and cannot get a hairs breadth beyond it; and do you think that we can please God in any duty or service that we perform, when the Lord

Lord sees and knows that we do all for self? do you think that God can accept of that Service? Make it your own case, suppose now you had a Servant, you give him Meat, and Drink, and Wages, and he Works, and Labours, and Toyls, but all is for himself; now, though he labour and work, yet is it pleasing to you? is it acceptable to you? Or suppose you have a Factor, and you send him to Trade for you, you trust him with your Stock, and he is diligent in his Trade, and follows his busines, but all his Trade is for himself, would you accept of this? is this pleasing to you? no, you will say, he is a very unfaithful wretched Servant, and you cannot be pleased with him. Why, this is the very case, God hath sent us into the World to Trade for him, and to act for him, now all that ever we do whilst we are in a state of unbelief, is for self; we do every thing for self; truly, until a Soul comes to believe on Christ, all that he doth is for himself, he cannot get out of the circle of self; but now, when a Soul comes to receive Christ by Faith, then he comes to act for Christ, and to deny self, never can deny himself before; as it was with the Apostle *Paul*, *Paul* before his Conversion he did very much, but yet all was for self; he was very zealous for the Law, and he was very upright, but all was for self; but now when he comes to believe on Christ, self is laid aside, *Now, saies he, I am nothing; 2 Cor. 12. 11. Though I be nothing; Paul an Apostle, an eminent*

next Saint of Christ, and yet he is nothing ! Now, saies he, *I am nothing, I can do nothing, I cannot pray, I know not how to pray, nor do nothing as I ought to do it ; I cannot so much as think a good thought,* saies he ; now self is abased, self is put down ; but now, mark, Christ is lifted up, 1 Cor. 15. 10. *I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the Grace of God which was with me; not I, saies he, but the grace of God with me, or in me ;* so saies he in Philip. 4. 12, 13. *I know how to abound, and how to want ; I have learned in all states and conditions therewith to be content ; I can do all things,* saies he, *through Christ that strengthens me.* Thus, when he comes to believe, he exalts Christ, and abases self ; Faith is a self-emptying Grace, it makes the Soul to be little or nothing , and makes Christ to be all ; it hath no strength in its self, but doth all in the strength of Christ ; and till the Soul comes to believe on Christ, self is the cheif agent in all that he doth, and therefore now it is impossible for a man or woman ever to please God, by all that he can do, till he comes to believe. You know what is said in the parable of the Talents , in Matt. 25. He that had one Talent, and improved it not, but hid it, he came and brought his Talent ; but did he please his Lord with the Talent ? He had not improved his Talent for his Lord ; and saies his Lord to him, *Thou wicked and sloathful Servant, take away the Talent from him.* Now what would his Lord have said to him if he had improved it for himself ? he did not im-

improve it for his Lord nor for himself neither, and was this displeasing to his Lord ? how much more displeasing would it have been if he had improved it for himself ? Certainly, whatever a man or woman doth , if he do it not for God , but for himself , he cannot please God in it : Then a man cannot please God without Faith, because without Faith he cannot go beyond self. *Ephraim is an empty Vine, he bringeth forth Fruit to himself, Hosea 10. 1.* And so God speaks of every unbeliever, such a man or woman is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit to himself ; he doth not, he cannot please God in any thing that he doth ; This is the first demonstration.

Secondly , Without Faith it is impossible to please God; because till a man or womans person be accepted and pleasing to God, all that ever he doth cannot please God ; and that cannot be without Faith. It is said in *Genesis 4. 4, 5.* that God had respect to *Abel* and to his Offering, he had not respect to *Cain* and his Sacrifice ; but he had respect to *Abel's* Sacrifice. why ? because he had first respect to *Abels* person. By Faith his person was accepted, and then his Sacrifice was accepted ; God had no respect to *Cains* Sacrifice , because his person was not accepted ; and his person was not accepted , because he was not a Believer. When a Soul comes to believe on Christ, then, and not till then his person is accepted ; because that which made God displeased with him is removed, and his Sin is pardoned , and now

now the Soul doth appear Righteous in the sight of God; but till a person comes to believe on Christ, it is impossible that ever this person should please God; because his person is not accepted, then whatever comes from him is not accepted. It is a full word that the Apostle hath to this purpose, in *Rom. 8. 8. So then* (he brings it in by way of conclusion) *So then, obey that are in the Flesh cannot please God.*

Obj. That are in the flesh, you will say, what is that? was not *Paul* in the Flesh? when he saies in *Gal. 2. 20. The life that I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God?* *Paul* was in the Flesh, and did not *Paul* please God? all the believers that are upon the face of the Earth are in the Flesh, and yet the Apostle saies here, *those that are in the Flesh cannot please God:* But I pray observe, what the Apostle means by being in the flesh, there is a dou-acceptation of the Word, one is to live this life here in the Body, but that is not the Apostles meaning, when he says *those that are in the flesh cannot please God*, for then never a Believer in the World can please God. But then 2dly, there is another meaning of the Word, according to the Scripture; to be in the flesh, is to be in a fleshly carnal State, a corrupt State, an unchanged State, an unbelieving State and condition; they that are thus in the flesh, cannot please God; and this is the fence of the Holy-Ghost in *Rom. 7. 5. For when we were in the Flesh*, saies he, &c. why, he was in the Flesh in one fence, but he was not in the Flesh in another fence; *when we were in the Flesh*, that is,

when we were unbelievers, in a fleshly carnal state, when we were so in the flesh, we could not please God, and no man that is in the Flesh in that fence can please God. But why is it not possible for a man or woman that is an Unbeliever to please God? Why so? why, look but into the former verse, *Rom.8.7.* there he gives you the reason of it, why those that are Unbelievers cannot please God; because *the carnal mind is enmity against God*, it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be; and then he brings in this conclusion, *So then they that are in the Flesh*, they that have a carnal mind, they that are altogether unbelievers, *cannot please God*; because they are Enemies to God, enemies in the highest degree; for mark the expression, he doth not say the carnal mind is an enemy to God, but he puts it in the abstract, *the Carnal mind is enmity against God*; Enmity it self; it is irreconcileable to God, it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be, till God change it. Now see the force of the demonstration, every unbeliever is an Enemy to God, and every thing he doth comes from a principle of enmity against God; and do you think that can please God? though he seems to do much for God, he prays much, and reads much, and is much in thanksgiving, and much in confessing of sin, but all this comes from a principle of enmity against God, and what can this please God? Suppose now you should have an enemy, and he should come and seem to speak you fair, and you know that he hath a heart full of hatred

hatred and enmity against you; possibly; he comes and confesses he hath done you wrong, and he is sorry for it, but he hopes he shall do so no more; if you know he comes and speaks this with a spirit of Enmity, and that he doth maintain his enmity as fully in his heart and mind as ever, are you pleased with these confessions ? no, you abhor him the more, because he comes in a dissembling hypocritical way. Now, God sees and knows our Hearts, possibly we may be taken with some such expressions of an enemy, and think he means as he says, and take it in good part; but a Man cannot deceive God. So when an Unbeliever comes and confesses his Sins to God, the Lord sees he doth it with a spirit of enmity, he comes with his humble petitions and supplications, and the Heart is full of Enmity and hatred against God; Will the Lord now accept of this? He comes and gives thanks to God, but the Lord looks upon all as hypocritical and flattering; and can this be pleasing to God? in Psalm 78. 34. *When he slew them, when they fought him, and they returned and inquired early after God.* Verse 35. *And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the High God their Redeemer.* Now, they challenge acquaintance with God, and claim interest in God; well, but what doth the Holy-Ghost say of this their inquiring after God? Verse 36. *Nevertheless, they Flattered him with their Mouth, and they Lyed unto him with their Tongues.* And could God be pleased with this? I pray consider, this is the very case, every Unbeliever is

an Enemy to God, is in a State of enmity till such time as he comes to believe on Christ; then indeed the enmity is taken away; but till he come to believe on Christ, he is an enemy to God, and he hates God in his Soul, and whatever he doth he doth but dissemble; if he comes and confess his sins, and give thanks to God, and make petitions and supplications to God, all this doth not please God, he doth but Flatter, and play the Hypocrite, and Lye to God, to his Face. How then can a Man or Woman please God without Faith? that is the Second demonstration. Take one more.

Thirdly, Without Faith it is impossible to please God, why? because all that ever a man or Woman doth that is an unbeliever, is all but dead works, all is Stinking, Dead, a dead Service, and a dead Sacrifice, whatever he brings to God, it is dead, his Prayers and Thanksgivings are dead, and his Supplications and Petitions are all dead, his Reading and Hearing the Word is all dead, all that he doth is dead. Now do you think that the living God can or will be pleased with dead services? can this be pleasing to him? all is dead, because it comes from a dead principle, every unbelieving man and woman in the World is spiritually dead, and therefore all that comes from him must be dead; they are all dead works, as the Apostle calls them, in *Hebrews 6. 1.* *Leaving the Principles of Repentance from dead works*, saies he, and so in *Hebrews 9. 14.* *How much more*, says he, *shall the Blood of Christ, who through the etern-*

nal Spirit offered up himself to God without spot, purge your Conscience from dead works, &c. when the Blood of Christ comes to be sprinkled upon the Soul by Faith, then he is cleansed from dead works; but before, all is dead, his faithfulness in his calling, his thanksgivings, his prayers, and all, is dead, and how can this please a living God? Can a man gather Grapes of Thorns, and Figs of Thistles? No. So, can any thing that is lively and acceptable to God, come from a dead Heart? No. Can God be pleased with that which is dead? that which is dead is displeasing to you; if they give you dead Drink, dead Beer, or dead Wine, doth it please you? No, you will say you had rather drink Water. All the services that an unbeliever can perform, they are all but dead in the favour of God, they are all stinking, loathsome things, therefore how can these things be pleasing unto God? This is the state of every unbeliever, he is spiritually dead, and all that he doth is dead, nothing that is living or lively can come from a dead thing; a dead thing cannot produce a living action; but now, by Faith, a soul comes to be made alive; when a soul comes to receive Christ he receives a principle of Life; but every unbeliever is dead, and therefore nothing that he does can be pleasing unto God. So now you have heard the point demonstrated to you, That it is impossible for any man or woman to please God without Faith. We come now in the next place for the further clearing this truth, and for your more distinct understand-

ing of it, to remove some objections that possibly may be made against it; As first, what is nothing pleasing to God without Faith? You will say, did not the Elect please God from all Eternity? did not God chuse the Elect, and set his love upon them? did not they please God? yet they had no Faith: then it seems it is possible to please God without Faith. Indeed, if the *Arminians* were to answer this, they would easily answer it; for they make election to be upon foreseen Faith, that God did foresee that such and such a man would believe, and therefore he elected him; and if so, then the elect cannot please God without Faith; but we do not joyn with them in that thing, there was not any thing foreseen that did move God to elect one or another. In *Romans 9. 11.* the Apostle there, instances in the two Children, *Jacob* and *Esau*, For the Children being not yet born, having done neither good nor evil, God did not consider them as having done good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election might stand, not of Works but of him that calleth: It was said unto her the Elder shall serve the Younger. God doth not consider that in point of election, for election is not the effect of Faith foreseen, but Faith is the consequent of Election; he hath chosen us, that we should be Holy, that we should believe, in *Eph. 1.4.* and in *Acts 13. 48.* And as many as were Ordained to Eternal Life, believed! Election is antecedent to Faith and believing; God was not pleased with the Elect,

Elect, because of their Faith; no, but they were chosen to Faith: and then, did not they please God without Faith? there is the objection still.

*Ans*w. I answer shortly, That the Elect did not please God, but God was pleased out of his free Grace to set his Love of Benevolence upon them, and thereby did intend in time to shew Love and Friendship to them; I say, it was not because they pleased God, that God chose them, and elected them; but God was pleased out of his infinite free Grace and Love to ordain them in time, to manifest his love of friendship to them; so that it was not for Faith nor without Faith, for they did not please God.

Obj. But then you will say, Did not *Adam* in innocency please God? if he did, then it is possible to please God without Faith, for *Adam* had no Faith in innocency. Now, before the fall *Adam* did please God; was there not a sweet intercourse between God and *Adam*? was there not a covenant made between God and *Adam*? Did not God come and speak in a familiar way to *Adam*? Surely *Adam* pleased God, *Adam* had not Faith; then it is possible to please God without Faith. For Answer to this,

First, In a word, *Adam* had a Faith, though not such a Faith as believers have now, yet *Adam* had a faith of Affiance, of Trust and Confidence, and Dependance upon God, which was required in the first Commandment; and *Adam* had all the Command-

ments of the Law written upon his Heart.

2. But *Secondly*, This Truth doth presuppose man in a sinful fallen state, *Adam* after his fall, and so all the posterity of *Adam*; now, there is no Son nor Daughter of *Adam* since the Fall that can ever please God without Faith; *Adam* himself since the fall, if ever he pleased God it was by Faith, for the Apostle speaks of those that are supposed to be Sinners and Enemies against God, That *without Faith it is impossible for them to please God*.

Obj. But you will say, Have not some that have been unbelievers, by doing of those things that God hath required, pleased God? Look into the example of *Jebru*, 2 Kings 10. 30. You know that God commanded *Jebru* to go and cut off all the House of *Ahab*, that was his Message; that he should destroy all the posterity of *Ahab*, and so he did, in Chapt.9. and the fore-part of the 10th Chapter. Now then, see what a Testimony the Lord gives of his own approbation of *Jebru* at the 30 verse, *And the Lord said to Jebru, Because thou hast done well in Executing that which is right in mine Eyes, and hast done unto the House of Ahab according to all that was in mine Heart; thy Children of the Fourth Generation shall sit on the Throne of Israel.* Did not *Jebru* please God here? and was not *Jebru* an Unbeliever? see verse 31. *But Jebru took no heed to walk in the Law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart, for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to Sin.* And

so for Nebuchadnezzar, he did what God required him to do. Go, says God, *against Tyrus, and conquer it*, it cost him a hard bout, but did it not please God? Then it seems when men and women do that which God requires, they please God in so doing.

For Answer to this in two things.

Answe. *First*, That the thing that God commands being done do please God for the substance of it, for the matter of it, it is pleasing to God, and so far pleasing, as God may manifest his Approbation; he may give a testimony that he doth approve of it, by some outward reward, as he did to *Jehu*; God testified that what he did pleased him, and he gave him a reward. And so for *Nebuchadnezzar's* Warring against *Tyrus*, God did approve of it, and shew his acceptation of the thing, being done, by rewarding and recompensing of *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Ezekiel 29. 18, 19. and 20.* *Son of Man, Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon: hath caused his Army to serve a great Service against Tyrus, &c.* And what shall he have? he shall have a reward; *verse 19. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, behold, I will give the Land of Egypt unto Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon, &c.* That is one Answer, That the thing that God Commands, being done, God doth approve of it for the Substance. But,

Now, *Secondly*, Though God do approve of the thing that is done for the substance of it, yet being done by such a person, in such a manner, to such an end, God doth not accept

cept it. As now, take both these Instances again. *Jehu*, God did approve of the thing that he did, and manifested his approbation of it; his cutting off the posterity of *Ahab*, God approved of it; but for the manner of *Jehu's* doing of it, it being done in the way of unbelief, God expresses his displeasure against it, in *Hosea 1. 4.* saies God, *yet a little while, and I will avenge the Blood of Jezebel upon the House of Jehu.* What? would God be revenged for doing that which he required? God Commanded him to cut off the Posterity of *Ahab*, and God approved of it; but for the manner of doing of it, it being done by such a one in a state of unbelief, he did not please God in it; the thing it self was acceptable to God; but for the manner of it, God was not pleased with it. And so for *Nebuchadnezzar*, God calls him his Servant, in *Jeremiah 25. 9.* *The breaking of the Nations by Nebuchadnezzar was a thing that God required: and yet being done by him, God will be revenged on him for it.* Therefore if you look into *Haggai 2. 22.* God threatens there to destroy *Nebuchadnezzar's* Kingdom that had destroyed so many Nations; and yet he had done but that that God had set him about; so that observe, and understand the Answer thus, that the thing done that God requires, for the substance of it, God doth allow and approve of it: but being done by one that is an Unbeliever, God doth not accept of his person nor of his Service, God may allow it so far as to manifest his approbation of it, and to give

give some outward recompence and reward for it, and yet notwithstanding God doth not allow it, so as to accept it with a Gracious acceptance, being done by such a one.

Obj. 4. But the Fourth Objection is of greatest Weight and Moment, and a matter of the greatest Temptation, and that is this; you will say to me, But if it be impossible for a Man or woman to please God without Faith, then it is in vain for any man or woman to endeavour to do any thing that is pleasing unto God; for if it be impossible to please God by what we do, then why should we pray, and hear the Word, and read the Word? here is a Temptation that I suppose will presently come in upon you. If it be impossible to please God without Faith, hath not this a tendency to put people into despair of ever hoping to please God by all that they can do?

But for Answer to it briefly in two things.

Ans/w. 1. First, Though it be true, that it is impossible for any Man or Woman to please God without Faith, yet notwithstanding, (mark I pray what I say) yet God may please to look towards the prayers and endeavours of an Unbeliever; God may please graciously to look towards their desires and supplications, when they are in the Lords way, seeking of him; I do not say God will do it, but I say God may do it; perhaps God may look towards an unbeliever, and give ear to the prayers that he makes (I pray mind it:) because here is a

very

very great Temptation that is ready secretly to prevail over us upon the hearing of such a Truth as this, that we cannot please God by all that ever we can do. Why, then a Man had as good take his course, and Sin, and take his pleasures in the World, he can but displease God at last, and he cannot please him by all that he can do: Therefore, I say, here is the first Answer, Though it is true, we cannot say certainly that God will be pleased with the prayers and endeavours of an Unbeliever, yet God may please graciously to look towards the prayers and supplications of an unbelieving Soul; I pray else, why doth the Apostle Peter put *Simon Magus* upon it to pray to God, in *Acts 8. 22.* *Simon Magus* was a Sorcerer, and he listened and hearkened to what *Philip* Preached, and forsooth he would be a convert, and went for a Believer; *Peter* and *John* hearing the report what was done by the Gospel, went to confirm him; but *Peter* presently smelt out *Simon Magus* what he was, by his offering him Money for the gift of the Holy Ghost: saies he, *Thy Money perish with thee: I perceive that thou art in the Gall of bitterness, and in the Bond of iniquity, repent, says he, therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee.* *Peter* put him upon Prayer, he was a wicked Man, an Unbeliever, in the Gall of bitterness, and in the Bond of iniquity, yet pray to God, saies he, perhaps the thought of thy Heart may be forgiven thee; And so *Paul* speaks,

speaks in 2 Tim. Ch. 2. Two last Verses, *In meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance, to the acknowledging of the Truth.* God may peradventure give them repentance, though it is a certain Truth, that *without Faith it is impossible to please God.* Yet thus much I may say, to help to take off this objection, That there is a perhaps, if you be found diligent in seeking God, and humbling your Souls before the Lord, peradventure you may be forgiven; I do not say you shall certainly be forgiven; and God will certainly hear you; but perhaps, as Peter said to Simon Magus, perhaps, and if peradventure, says Paul, God will give them Repentance; then here is a [perhaps] for those that are Unbelievers, that God may graciously please to have respect towards them, though God be not pleased with them nor their prayers, and duties; therefore let not this Temptation prevail over you upon that account, namely, to give over all; because you cannot please God by what you do peradventure God may have respect towards you; but now, if you go on, and cast off seeking God, and the ways of God, and go on in your sinful ways and courses, there is no perhaps for such, no; but if Men sin wilfully (mark the expression) in Heb. 10. 25, 26: If Men sin wilfully, and cast off the means of Grace wilfully, there is no perhaps for such: He puts an impossibility upon himself ever to be recovered therefore, give not way to the Temptation, but say, Well, there

there is a peradventure, and perhaps for me, though I be an Unbeliever. But,

Secondly, Let me answer it in another thing; Though it be true, that without Faith it is impossible to please God; Nay, though we do displease God by all that we do; make the objection as strong as you can; it is impossible to please God by all my Prayers, Tears, and Confessions, in my waitings upon God; yet, notwithstanding, know and understand it for a Truth, that there are degrees of displeasing God; a man may displease God more or less. Look into *Zachariah 1. 15*. *I am very sore displeased with the Heathen that are at ease for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction.* God may be sorely displeased, and God may be less displeased with a person; as now, if one sin doth displease God, will not many sins displease him much more? if that which we call a small sin will displease God, then a greater sin will displease him much more. So now, if we displease God by our Duties and Services, then may we not displease God much more by casting off duties? Nay, may we not displease him most of all not only by casting off Duties, but by running desperately and Headlong into all, manner of Evil. Mark how you conclude, you cannot please God by what you do, therefore you will displease him more; this is to run headlong and desperately into the lowest Hell. As there are degrees of glory in Heaven, as one Star differs from another Star in

in Glory; so there are degrees of Torment in Hell. It shall be more tollerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* at the day of Judgement, than for those that have the Gospel and do not improve it. *As she bath fared deliciously, saies God, so much the more Torment give her, saies God, in Revelations 18. 7.* So now, because we do displease God by what we do in our duties and services, therefore shall we run further on to displease God more and more? Is it not enough to displease God by doing things irregularly and unbelievingly, but shall we therefore run headlong upon wickedness, and care not how much we displease God? O! therefore let us have a care of this Temptation, for it is very great and dangerous; because we cannot please God by doing what we can, therefore we will run headlong on to displease him all that we can: So now I have finished the explication of this Truth, *That without Faith it is impossible to please God.* I cannot now come to that Application which I chiefly intend.

Appli. But in a word, because I would not leave you wholy without some word of Application:

Use. Here then, let all those that are Unbelievers understand and know this day from the Lord, what a dangerous state and condition they are in; it is such a state and condition as is not to be rested quietly in, because that they cannot possibly please God by all that they can do, I would not speak any thing to discourage and cast down any, but to awaken poor Souls: Understand and know this day from

from the Lord, that you never yet did please God by all that ever you have done; you have made possibly many Hundred prayers and petitions to God, you have been exercised in holy Duties and Services all along from day to day; yet you have not pleased God in any thing that you have done; Nay, without Faith you cannot please God in whatever you shall do, it is impossible. What should I say more, read but the Text, saies the Apostle, *without Faith it is impossible to please God*. The Apostle doth not only speak of such as live in open known sins of Uncleanness, and Drunkenness, and Swearing, and Lying, that they do not please God, that is plain enough; every one will say that these men do not please God, and that it is impossible they should please God. And those that live in secret Sins, in secret covetousness of heart, in secret oppression, secret omission and neglect of duty, Family or Closet-prayer, do these things please God think you? not that I speak to such as these are, but to those that are professors, and that are careful to walk strictly and conscientiously in their places, as far as ever they have light and understanding; you are careful possibly to deal righteously in your Callings and Trade, you desire to make Conscience of your ways in buying and selling, and trading and conversing with the World, to walk uprightly towards all men, and what, doth not this please God, you will say? do not I please God in this? I pray mark, is this Faith or no? The Apostle saies,

saies here, *without Faith it is impossible to please God*; suppose you perform duties, wait upon God in his Worship and Ordinances, are very diligent in attending upon the Word Preached, and very diligent in reading the Scriptures daily, day by day, and you are very diligent also in private duties, such as I mentioned before doth not this please God, you will say ? why , I pray still do but have recourse to the Apostles words, *without Faith it is impossible to please God*. Can you say that these things are Faith ? *without Faith it is impossible to please God* : But if a Man or Woman be so Charitable that they are ready upon all occasions to relieve the Bowels of the Saints, doth not this please God ? why, saies the Apostle, *without Faith it is impossible to please God*. Do you believe that this is a Truth that this Text holds forth?our Charity and good works, they are not Faith, and *without Faith it is impossible to please God*. Reckon what you can reckon , and say what you can for your selves, yet consider, is this Faith or no ? If it be not Faith, it cannot please God. Possibly you may desire and endeavour to walk in the strictest way of profession, and worship God in the closest way ; suppose you do so, you desire to walk in Church-fellowship with the Saints, but this is not Faith still, and *without Faith it is impossible to please God*. I pray consider the Apostle Paul, saies Paul, before he was converted and was brought to believe on Christ, in *Acts 16. 5* says he, *After the most*

straitest sect of our Religion, I lived a Pharisee. And says he in another place, in Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9. *As concerning the righteousness which is in the law, I was blameless, says he at verse 6. But now mark, says he, this was not faith; though when he comes to believe on Christ, Now, says he, I look at all that ever I did as nothing, and I count all but dung that I may win Christ.* Brethren, whatever we do, *without faith it is impossible for us to please God.*

But possibly you will say to me, I hope I do believe: If you do, it is well; But, I pray, do you know what it is to believe? ask this question to your own hearts, Do you know what it is to believe? It is not to believe that every thing that is spoken in the Gospel is true; no, no, this Faith whereby we come to please God, is another manner of Faith.

But suppose now that you do believe indeed and in truth, I pray have you done all that ever you have done in a way of Faith and believing? truly without Faith you see it is impossible to please God; even you that are Believers, without acting of Faith in what you do, you cannot please God.

Ques. But you will say to me then, *How shall a Christian man or woman so perform duties in Faith, so as they may be pleasing unto God?* As suppose now the duty of Prayer, How shall we perform the duty of prayer, so as it may be pleasing unto God? or for hearing the Word, How shall we so hear the Word in Faith that it may be pleasing unto God? and how

how shall we partake of the Lords-Table in Faith so as to please God?

I cannot come to answer this now; but possibly if the Lord please, I may speak something to that at some other time; all that I have to say for the present is this:

You see, Friends, Brethren and Beloved, what cause we have all of us, I speak not only to unbelievers, but to those that are believers; as for unbelievers, what cause have they to go home and bewail and bemoan their condition before the Lord? Look back upon all that you have done throughout your whole lives, and you may write this upon it all, you have displeased God; you have made many Prayers, and confessed many Sins, and given thanks to God often; you have read and heard the Word, and have done this and that, and yet in all that you have done you have never pleased God, because *without Faith it is impossible to please God*: Go and bewail it before the Lord, that you have led such a course of life, that you have done nothing that hath been pleasing unto God. And you that are Believers, have you done all that you have done in Faith? have you prayed in faith? have you heard the word in faith, and have you partaken in other Ordinances in a way of faith? we have all cause to go home, and in private fall down before the Lord, and acknowledge that we have displeased God in every duty and service that we have performed.

But thus much shall suffice for this time.

SERMON VI.

Hebrews XI. 6.

*But without Faith it is impossible to please
Him.*

THe words as you have heard, are an intire
Proposition.

Doct. *That without Faith it is impossible for any
Man or Woman, by all that ever they can do, to
please God.* You have heard it opened at large, we came the last day to touch upon a word of Application, and that was to shew what a sad and uncomfortable condition every unbelieving person was in ; that nothing that ever he hath done, or can do, or shall do whilst he is in this state, can be pleasing unto God ; For *Without Faith it is impossible to please Him.* Whatever Duties we perform, whatever Ordinances we partake in, if all be not done in Faith, it cannot be pleasing unto God.

Quest. You will say unto me then, *How shall
we so act in Faith in the performance of all Duties,
and*

and in the partaking of all Ordinances, that so we may please God in what we do.

This is a great Question, and I shall desire through the Lords assistance to speak something to this at this time. And, O Brethren, this is a matter of very great concernment, to do all that we do in Faith, to pray every Prayer in Faith, and every time we hear the Word, to hear it in Faith; and if we partake of the Lords-Table, every time to partake in Faith; or else we do not please God in any of these Duties. Let me therefore a little stir you up to it, that you may be provoked, if possible, to do all that you do in Faith.

Briefly, Let me hint *three or four* words that way, to shew you, that it is of very great concernment, for every one of us to perform every Duty, and to partake of every Ordinance, in a way of Faith. For first of all, else all that ever we do, all our labour, all our endeavours, all our pains in our duties and performances, will be all in vain. And would a wise man be willing to do any thing in vain? to take pains and all in vain? *Have ye suffered so many things* (saies the Apostle, Gal. 3, 4.) *in vain?* Truly, so may we say to those that do not exercise Faith in their duties and performances, have you done so many things in vain? Would any of you take pains in your Callings willingly in vain, and loose all your labour? Are you willing that all your labour, and travel, and pains from day to day should be lost, and all in vain? You would count it

a very grievous and uncomfortable thing, if any of you should take any great Voyage by Sea, and all your Voyage and Hazard should be in vain ? or if you should take any great Journey by Land, in heat and cold, in wet and dry, through thick and thin, and all your Journey should be in vain, and nothing at all come of it, what a grief and vexation would it be to your hearts ? Now Brethren, I pray Consider of it, if we perform duties, take pains in duties day by day, perform Duties in our Families, and in our Closets every day, presenting our Prayers and Stipplications before the Lord, and frequently in season and out of season attending upon the Word of God Preached, and go on thus week after week, month after month, and year after year, labouring and taking pains in your duties, and yet when all comes to all it is all in vain ; Truly, thus it will be, if it be not done in Faith; you have prayed so many times in a Week, and so many times in a year, possibly a thousand times in your Life, yet all is in vain ; for you see you cannot please God, and therefore it is in vain. You desire to please God in your Duties, and in your attendances upon the Lord, but all is in vain ; What a sad and uncomfortable thing is this ? Therefore certainly it is of great concernment to look to that, that we do not perform Duties in vain, that we do not Pray, and Read, and Hear without Faith, for then all will be in vain.

Secondly, Consider a little further, What an uncomfortable thing is it for a man to meet with

with a disappointment in his great expectation? When a man hath great expectations of a business, and meets with a disappointment in the conclusion, that his expectation is frustrated; you know what *Solomon* saith, in *Prov. 13. 12.* *Hope deferred makes the heart sick.* If a man have hopes of a thing, and his hopes be only put off and deferred, though it may be accomplished at last, yet if it be deferred beyond the time, it makes his heart sick. Ay, but when a mans expectations be not only deferred, but altogether frustrated, that he meets with nothing but disappointments, What an uncomfortable thing is this? and the greater the expectation of a man is, or the greater the thing is his expectation is about the greater, and sadder will his disappointment be. You know how it fared with *Haman*, in *Eftb. 6.* When the King propounded that Question to him, *What shall be done unto the man whom the King delighteth to honour?* Why, thought he, whom the King delights to honour, is none but my self; Surely I am the man: here was his hope and expectation; but now to be frustrated of this great expectation of being honoured and advanced, and for the King to say, Go take the Kings Horse, and the Royal apparel, and go and set *Mordecai* thereon (his great Enemy) go and proclaim before him, *thus it shall be done to the man whom the King delighteth to honour;* thus was his expectation frustrated, and it came to nothing. And how did it make his heart sick? He went home to his Wife and

company, and he was even sick at the very heart. Truly, Brethren, when a mans expectations are raised from his Duties and Performances, that he hath gone on in a way of Prayer all his Life-long, and attending upon God in the way of his Ordinances all his Life-long, and his expectation is great, he thinks he hath been pleasing God all his life-long; and when all comes to all, at last he shall see that he wanted Faith, and so never pleased God in all his Life, by all the Duties and Services that ever he performed. Here now will his expectations be frustrated; and when he comes to lie upon his Death-bed, he thinks he hath been pleasing God in performing Duties, and attending upon God in his way, he shall meet with nothing but Disappointments; He hath not pleased God by all that he hath done all his life-long.

3. Nay, Let me add *Thirdly*, If our Duties be not done in Faith, truly, then instead of being the better for them, we shall certainly be the worse for all the Duties that ever we performed. Now, what an uncomfortable thing is it for a man to labour and take pains, and all for loss? You that trade in the World, that take a great deal of pains, are up early and down late; why, if so be that you go backward in your estates, for all your pains-taking, and labour, and toyl, and travel, this will be very uncomfortable to you; to labour and toyl night and day, as it were, and all for loss. Suppose now a great Merchant, he trades and traf-

trafficks abroad at Sea, and trades at home by Land ; and when he comes to cast up his accounts, he hath done all for loss, he is not the richer, but a great deal the poorer, What an uncomfortable thing will this be to him, that he hath been labouring, and travelling, and toyling, and spending his strength, and his time, and his pains, and all for loss ? He is the worse, and not the better, as 'tis said of the woman that had the bloody Issue, she went to the Physicians and used the means, and still she was not the better, but the worse. You would count this a very uncomfortable thing, if any of your Children or Relations should be sick, and you call for the help of the Physician, and he applies means, and still all the Physick that is taken tends to the hurt of the Party, he is never the better, but the worse for all the means that is used, truly it would make your hearts ake : Truely thus it is when a man hath been taking pains all his life long, exercising of himself in holy Duties and Ordinances, worshipping and serving God, and endeavouring to please God, as he thinks ; but now instead of pleasing God by what he hath done, he hath rather displeased God. For certainly, we are either the better or the worse for every Ordinance that we partake in ; when we come to hear a Sermon, if we do not go away better, we go away worse ; for the Word will work one way or other : And so far Prayer, if we be not the better, we are the worse ; when our Duties and Services have not been done

done in Faith, they have not been pleasing to the Lord. And when a man comes to cast up his accounts, he will find himself the worse for all the Services that ever he performed ; because they have not been done in Faith.

4. And let me add one word more, If our Duties and Services be not done in Faith, then I pray what have we been doing of all this time, but cheating and deceiving our own Souls ; going on and taking pains, and all to delude and deceive our own Souls ? We have been steering a wrong course ; instead of making Christ our Righteousness, we have been making a Christ of our Duties and Services, and so deceive our own Souls ; if we do not act Faith in the performance of Duties, then we make a Christ of them, and so deceive our own Souls : for if we do not lean upon Christ, we lean upon them. A man or woman that doth not act Faith in their Duties and Services, they do but steer a wrong Course all their life-long. Suppose now a man should steer his course at Sea by a Compass that is false, he may go on and sail amain Night and Day before the Wind, he may go on in his Course ; but all the way that he makes he doth but deceive himself, he will never come to the Haven he aims at , and desires to come to : He doth but deceive and delude himself. Why? Because he fails by a false Compass, and so steers his Course wrong. Truly thus it is with many Professors, they perform Duties, they go on with full sail in Duties, they perform

form Duties every day, and they attend upon the Lord, as they have opportunity, to hear the Word, and read the Word daily, they go on a main. Ay, but still they steer a wrong Course, they sail by a false Compass, and certainly they will never come to the Haven of Rest, but will run upon their own ruine at last. Therefore observe it, the Devil will allow a Professor to go on in a course of Duties, to pray every day in his Family and Closet; he will allow him to go on in a course of Ordinances, attending upon God daily, so long as his Duties and Services are not touched with the Loadstone, if they be not done in Faith, he knows what will be the Issue of them; he lets him alone, because he knows he doth but deceive himself and delude his own Soul: he looks to come to such a Haven, but he will perish and miscarry for ever. Therefore Brethren, I pray consider, whether it be not a matter of very great concernment for every one of us to look to it, and be careful that all our Duties and Services be done in Faith, or else we can never please God.

Well, This is the Question, How shall we so perform our Duties and Services in Faith, as they may be pleasing unto God ?

Answ. In answer to it, there are some Directions that I shall lay down, that may be of general Concernment, and reach all the Duties that we are to perform, and shew you how we shall perform them in Faith, that they may be pleasing unto God. And then afterward

ward we shall come to lay down more particular Directions, how we may perform every Duty ; as Prayer in Faith , and hearing the Word in Faith, and partaking of the Lords-Supper in Faith; how we may perform every Duty in Faith, that so we may please God in what we do.

First, Then for the General Rules that we may make use of in all Duties, for the performing of them in Faith, that so they may be pleasing unto God.

1. *First then, take this for a general Rule that may be of concernment for every Duty, Let us look especially that we be Believers, that we have a Faith in Christ ; for if we be not Believers, we can never perform any Duty in Faith ; we must first believe in Christ, before we can perform any duty in Faith : Therefore I say , Let us be sure of that , that the work of Faith be wrought effectually in our hearts, that we do really and truely believe on Christ ; be sure of that, lay that for a foundation, and the more clear that is , the more sure we are of that, that there is a real work of Faith wrought in our hearts; we may be the more easily perswaded that what we do, we do in Faith; though that alone is not enough neither : But without that, it is impossible for us to do any thing in Faith, so as to please God ; it is by Faith that our persons come to be accepted, without Faith our persons are not pleasing unto God : No; It is through the beloved, that we must be accepted in our persons, Ephes. 1. 6.*

And

And if our persons be not accepted, nothing that we do can be accepted; No, we may pray day by day, and cry aloud, and we may perform extraordinary Duties too, and none of these accepted, if our persons be not accepted through Faith in Christ; there must be the foundation of all: For, Brethren, it is by Faith that our hearts are purified and made holy; now if so be that we be not holy, we cannot please God by any thing that we can do; for he is a holy God, and whatsoever is pleasing to God, must be holy. Now it is by *Faith* that our hearts come to be purified, Act. 15. 9. By Faith we come to have an habitual Holiness wrought in us, though there may be, and there is still a body of sin; but still there is a Principle of Holiness, by Faith, wrought in the heart, whereby we come to be made holy in Gods account. For if so be that we be not made holy through Faith, then all that ever we do is unclean, all that comes from us is unclean; look as the Fountain or Spring is, so is all that issues from it; every drop of water that comes from it, is accordingly. Can you bring forth a clean thing out of an unclean? None can do it. Does a bitter fountain send forth sweet water? No it cannot be: The fountain must first be made clean and sweet, or else all the streams will be according as the fountain is. A corrupt Tree cannot bring forth good fruit; make the Tree good, or the fruit cannot be good. All that comes from a man or woman that is in a state of unbelief, is

un-

unclean; and whatever Duties or Ordinances he touches, is unclean and polluted, and therefore cannot please God. Look, as it was under the Law, if one that was Legally or Ceremonially unclean, touched any thing, it was unclean, Hag. 2.12, 13. *If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or porridge, or wine, or oyl, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the Priests answered and said, no, it shall be unclean.* So now, whatever Duties be performed under the *New-Testament*, if we be not Believers, if our hearts be not purified by Faith, truly then all that we touch is impure and unclean to us, as the Apostle saith, Tit. 1. 15. *Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled (Who are those? he explains it in the very next words) and unbelieving, is nothing pure:* They can do nothing that the Infinite, Holy and Pure God can be pleased with. Now there is no way for a Soul to be made clean, to have an habitual Holiness, but through Faith wrought by the Spirit of Christ, and the application and sprinkling of the Virtue of the Blood of Christ upon the Conscience; So a man or woman comes to be made clean: In Heb. 9. 13. saies the Apostle there, *For if the blood of bulls, and goats, and the Ashes of an beifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifie to the purifying of the flesh;* that is, The Holy Water under the Law, that being sprinkled upon the unclean did purifie him, and make him clean: and if the sprinkling of that water did purifie from Ceremonial Uncleanness, *How much*.

much more shall the blood of Christ, verse. 14. Who through the eternal Spirit offered up himself to God, purge your Consciences from dead works, to serve the living God? Two things the Apostle doth plainly hint to us in this Scripture;

Namely, (1.) That all our Works that we perform before we be cleansed by the Blood of Christ, they are all but dead works, unholy and unclean. And then (2.) it implies thus much, That we come to be cleansed from our dead works, by the sprinkling of the Blood of Christ upon us, and that by the Eternal Spirit, the Spirit of God. This is the way, and the only way whereby a man or woman comes to be habitually clean and holy, by Faith in Christ, whereby the Soul is not only justified from the Guilt of sin; but there is the Spirit of Christ conveyed and communicated to the soul, whereby there is a principle of Holiness, of Habitual Holiness put upon the Soul. Well, this is now the first general Rule, and therefore I say, Brethren and Friends, it is of great concernment to us to look to that; if we would act Faith in our Duties, so as to please God, we must first of all look that there be a work of Faith wrought in our hearts, that we do truly believe on Christ; and to that end we should be venturing to lean the weight of our Souls upon Christ, and upon his Blood and Righteousness, as it is tended and held forth to us in the Gospel: and to this end also, let us wrestle with the Lord, and beg for the Spirit of Faith to be given out to us. Christ hath

promised that our Heavenly Father will give the Holy Ghost to them that ask him : This is the first Rule, to look that we be true Believers.

(2.) Secondly, As Faith does possess the Soul with Habitual Holiness ; so it is by Faith also that a Soul comes to be cleansed from actual Guilt ; Therefore the Second Rule, to act in Faith, in our Duties and Performances, is to put away all Guilt, all sinful Uncleanness from us, when we come to perform any Service, or offer up any Sacrifice to the Lord; If a Man or Woman come before the Lord in the guilt of any known sin that he lives in, if he do not put that away, it makes all his Duties unclean, and not pleasing to God. A man cannot act in Faith, so long as he comes knowingly with any guilt upon his Conscience, living in the neglect of any known Duty, or living in the commission of any known sin ; if he live in it, he cannot act in Faith : Faith will purge and cleanse the Soul from sin, that he will put away all guilt when he comes to draw near to God. See what is said in *Job 11. 13, 14, 15.* *If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him : If Iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle, for then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot, &c.* When you come to stretch out your hands towards God in Prayer, or when you come to draw near to him in any Duty, Then, saies he, *if there be Iniquity in your hand, put it far away ; Do not come to God in Prayer, or in any Ordinance, in any known*

known Sin that you do allow your selves in ; for if you do, you cannot perform those Duties in Faith, and so they cannot be pleasing unto God : Therefore be sure that you put away all evil from you. As now for Example , (to shew you the Application of this Rule, that you may know how to make use of it for every Duty) suppose now you go to prayer , if you would pray in Faith, so as to please God, you must not allow your selves in any known sin ; No, says *David*, in *Psal. 66. 18.* *If I regard Iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not bear me :* I cannot make a Prayer in Faith ; If you have made a thousand Prayers , though you be a Believer in the main, yet all those Prayers that you have put up in such a way, with the guilt of any known sin upon you , that you allow your self in, and go on it, your Prayers have not been put up in Faith, and so God will not regard them : Therefore be sure of that, when you come to pray, see that you do not allow your self in any known sin. So if you come to hear the Word, if you would hear in Faith, so as to please God in it, you must put away all evil out of your hands; In *1. Cor. 1. 21.* says the Apostle there, *Lay aside all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls.* Do you desire to hear the Word in Faith, so as it may be a saving Word to your Souls? Then *Lay aside all Filthiness and Superfluity of naughtiness ; Allow your self in no known sin, when you come to draw near to God in any*

Ordinance. So the Apostle Peter, 1 Pet. 2, 1, 2. saies the Apostle there, *Laying aside all malice, and guile, and hypocrisy, and envy, and evil-speaking, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* Do you desire to hear the Word, so as you may please God in your hearing? Then let there be no Envy, nor Malice, nor Hypocrisie allowed in your hearts; for else you cannot receive the Word, so as to be milk to your Souls, so as to grow and profit by it. And so also, if you come to any other Ordinance, as to the Lords-Supper, you must come in Faith to it, and partake in Faith, or else we cannot please God by it. Now this is one way whereby we come to partake in Faith, namely, by cleansing our selves: Saies the Apostle, 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8. speaking by way of Allusion to the Pasover, *Christ our Pasover is sacrificed for us, let us therefore keep the Feast, not with the old leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* If we draw near to God in this Ordinance, we must cleanse our selves, in Jam. 4. 8. *Draw near to God, and God will draw near to you.* And how shall we draw near to God, so as God may draw near to us? Mark what follows, *Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purifie your hearts, ye double-minded.* Here is the way for us to draw near to God, in a way of Faith; for it is properly the work of Faith to purge the Heart, and to purge the Hands: That is the secon'd Direction, that may serve as a Generall Direction, to help us to draw near to

to God, in any Duty or Ordinance, so as to please God.

3. The *Third* way to perform Duties, so as to please God, is this; It is the proper work of Faith to empty the Soul of it self. Now if you will draw near to God in any Duty or Ordinance, so as to please God, then come with Self-emptyings; for Faith is a self-emptying Grace; that is the proper work of Faith, to empty the Soul of it self. Now there are two things that Faith does empty the Soul of in the performance of holy Duties; The one is, It empties the Soul of the sense of its own Suf-
ficiency and Ability to perform holy Duties; and also it empties the Soul of the sense of its own worthiness, to receive any Mercy from the Lord, in any Duty or Ordinance: These two things Faith doth empty the Soul of, and so you shall find it, that where Faith hath been acted and exercised, there hath been Self-emptyings. The Apostle *Paul* was a man that did live much in the excercise of Faith, and he professes it, *Gal. 2. 20*. That he *Lived by the Faith of the Son of God*; and you may observe how the Apostle emptied himself of Self-suffi-
ciency and Self-worthiness; for Self-suffi-
ciency, says he, in *Rom. 8.26*. *We know not how to pray, nor what to pray for as we ought.* The Apostle *Paul* that was such a great proficient in the School of Christ, such an eminent per-
son, yet saies he, *We know not how to pray*, he was empty of Self-sufficiency, and, saies he, in *2 Cor. 3. 5*. *Not that we are sufficient of our selves*

to think any thing as of our selves ; but our sufficiency is of God. Saies he, *I am so insufficient that I cannot so much as think a good thought.* What was he sufficient for then ? And, saies he in another place, *I cannot so much as will or desire any thing that is good.* It is God, saies he, *that worketh in us both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure.* And, saies he in 2 Cor. 12. 11. *though I be nothing ; What a word is this ?* The Apostle Paul, that was one of the eminentest Saints that lived upon the face of the earth in his days, yet says he, *I am nothing !* Paul living by Faith, was emptied of the sense of his own sufficiency ; and truly so also he was emptied of Self-worthiness of receiving any Mercy from God : For all his Duties and Services, saies he, *I am less than the least of all Saints ;* and Ephes. 3. 8. *To me, who am less than the least of all Saints, is this Grace given, &c.* And in 1 Cor. 15. 9. saies he, *I am the least of the Apostles, that am not worthy to be called an Apostle.* So, if you observe it, you may find it in all those that lived in the exercise of Faith, how they have been emptied of the sense of their own worthiness ; Abraham the Father of the Faithful, see how he lay low, and even crept in the dust before the Lord, and acknowledged himself not worthy to speak to the Lord in Prayer for Sodom, that he was fain to Apologize for himself at every turn, *Let not the Lord be angry, that I who am but dust and ashes have undertaken to speak unto the Lord,* Gen. 18. 27, 30, 32. I am unworthy, saies he, to speak unto

to the Lord for any Mercy either for my self or Sodom. And so Jacob, Lord, saies he , *I am less than the least of all thy Mercies, Gen. 32. 10. I am not worthy of the least Mercy from thee.* Thus Faith does empty the Soul, both of self-sufficiency, and also of self-worthiness. Now then to shew you how you should make use of this Rule, It will serve for every Duty that we perform; when we come to pray , we should draw near to God with this sense of our insufficiency, to lift up a Prayer unto God; we should come to God with a sense upon our hearts of our inability to perform the work; and also with a sense of our own unworthiness, that God should hear our Prayers; when we have prayed never so well, as others may judge , yet we must come with self-abasing, and self-emptying : So if we go to hear the Word , if we would hear in Faith, we should make use of this Rule , Lord I am unworthy to be admitted to hear thy Word; I am unworthy that thou shouldest speak to me ; and I am insufficient to hear thy Word as I ought to hear it: Thus come with self-emptying, and self-abasement. So when we come to the Lords-Supper, Lord, I have no strength now to partake of this Ordinance, as I ought to do ; I cannot prepare my self for it ; I have no strength to partake of it ; I have no sufficiency at all to partake of this or any other Ordinance , as I ought to do ; and I am unworthy that the Lord should draw near to me, to let me have

any Fellowship or Communion with himself: This is the Third general Rule.

Fourthly, If we would perform all Duties, and partake in all Ordinances in Faith, so as we may please God in what we do, Then let us do all that we do in the Name of Christ; for there is all our worthiness and all our acceptance. You know the Apostle gives us this Rule in Col. 3: 17. *Whatever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.* For if we do not what we do in his Name, it is not accepted: Look as it was under the Law, if a man under the Law were to bring a sacrifice; he was to bring it to the Priest, or else it was not accepted; but it was to be an Abomination; in Leuit. 17: 3, 4. *Whatsoever man of the house of Israel there be that killeth an ox, or lamb, &c. And bringeth it not unto the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, unto the Priest, that sould hath shed blood, and shall be cut off from among his People.* Though he brings never so good a sacrifice in it self, yet it must be brought unto the Priest; And so they were to bring their sacrifices, and have them laid upon the Alter; or else they were an Abomination and not acceptable to God. Now, Brethren, Jesus Christ is our great High-Priest, and Jesus Christ is our Alter too, by whom, and upon whom all our services and sacrifices must be offered, or else they are not accepted of God; therefore whatever you do, whatever Prayer you make, whatever Ordinance you partake in, do all in the Name of Jesus Christ; or else you

you do not do it in Faith, and it will not be pleasing unto God.

Quic. You will say, What is it to perform a Duty in the Name of Jesus Christ, so as it may be acceptable and pleasing to God?

Ans^r. For answer; Brethren, It is not enough for us to make mention of the Name of Christ in our Prayers, and to say; Through Jesus Christ our Lord, as you commonly conclude your Prayers (I do not blame you for this;) But it is not the naming of the Name of Christ, that is this doing of it in the Name of Christ. What is it then, you will say, for me to pray, or hear the Word, or partake of any Ordinance in the Name of Christ? Briefly, (for I would not enlarge) there are these Three things implied in it.

First, That we do look for our access into the presence of God through Christ, and for his sake; says the Apostle, in *Ephes. 2. 18.* *For through him we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father.* Through him we both, that is, both Jews and Gentiles, have access by one Spirit unto the Father; we have access into the presence of the Father through Christ. You know, Brethren, after *Adam* fell and transgressed, he was driven out from the presence of God. Before, indeed, he had communion with God, and access into the presence of God: but after he had broken the Covenant that God had made with him, he was driven out from the presence of God; and there was a Flaming Sword that stood to keep him from

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coming near to God. And so all his posterity are now driven from the presence of God, and cannot have access into the presence of God, but through Christ; and through him we may have access with boldness, as in *Heb. 4. 16.* *Let us come therefore boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need.* Through him we may come and have access into the presence of God, with boldness and confidence; that is one thing that is implied by performing any Duty in the Name of Christ, to look for our access into the presence of God through him.

Secondly, To do it in the Name of Christ, is to look for strength and assistance to perform our Duties from Christ: for as you heard before, we are altogether insufficient of our selves to do any thing, or think any thing that is good; not only as we are in a state of nature before Conversion, or before we be brought to believe in Christ; for that is a state and condition that the Apostle describes to be without strength, *Rom. 5. 6.* But this is not only the condition of Unbelievers, but even Believers themselves are insufficient of themselves to do any thing that is pleasing to God; as you may see in those Scriptures that I mentioned to you even now. You cannot pray, nor nor think a good thought; you cannot will, nor desire any thing; saies the Apostle, *I am nothing, and I can do nothing;* and yet saies the Apostle in *Phil. 4. 13.* *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me.* Through the help and strength of

of Christ I can pray, and I can hear the Word, and I can partake of the Lords-Supper in a way of Faith through Christ, and have communion with Christ in it, when there is Grace and strength communicated from Christ. This is the Second thing implied, To do every thing in the Name of Christ, is to be looking for all our help from Christ and him alone.

Thirdly, There is this further implied in it, when we perform any Duty in the Name of Christ, we look for all our acceptance of what we have done and performed only for Christ's sake, and through Christ, that the Lord should do this or that for us for Christ's sake, as the Apostle speaks, in Pet. 2. 5. *Ye are, saies he, a holy Priesthood to offer up Spiritual Sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.* You come and offer up your Sacrifices, your Prayers to God, your Duties and Services; But how shall they be acceptable to God? How? only by Jesus Christ; this is to perform a Duty in the Name of Christ; namely, when we look for access into the presence of God, to stand with a holy boldness in the presence of God with our Services through his being pleasing to the Father, and when we look for all our help and strength to the performance of our Duties from Christ, and when we expect all our acceptance of our Duties and Services through Christ. Now that you may see how to apply this Rule, and make use of it; suppose now you are to pray, you would pray in Faith, so as to please God, come then in the Name of Jesus

Jesus Christ. How? When I pray, I am to look to have access into the presence of God with my Prayers through him; and I am to expect assistance and strength from Jesus Christ to enable me to do it: And I am to look for assistance and acceptance of my Prayers that I have performed, only through Jesus Christ. And so I might shew you for hearing the Word: Tis a general Rule, we are to hear in Faith. How? Namely, to hear the Word in the Name of Jesus Christ. How is that? Thus to come and present our selves in presence of God through Christ, in Obedience to his will, that we may have access and stand in his presence in that Duty and Service through Jesus Christ; and to expect Grace and Strength from Christ, to enable me to attend unto the Word as I ought to do; without him I cannot hear as I should: but in hearing I shall not hear, if I have not strength from Christ to enable me; and when we have done, to look for acceptance through Christ, of the service that I have done. And so for partaking of the Lords Supper, we should do all in the Name of Christ; look for access into the presence of God in that Ordinance through Christ; look to have assistance to be carried on in the participation of that Ordinance by strength from Christ; and so look for acceptance of our participation of the Ordinance through Jesus Christ. That is the Forth General Rule.

5. Take one more; Would we so act Faith in our duties and Services, that they may be pleasing

pleasing unto God; the Rule is this; namely, to come with a resting and relying upon Christ, with expectation to have that given out unto us by the Ordinance, for which the Ordinance was instituted and appointed, and therefore Resting upon God, and Waiting upon God, are frequently called Faith in Scripture: saies David, in Psal. 62. 5. All my expectation is from God; *My Soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him.* Therefore will I rest upon him for the giving out of what I do expect from him. And so in Isa. 26. 4. *Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength: Trust in him for ever.* Whenever you come to any Duty or Ordinance, still act in Faith, resting upon God with an expectation to receive that from God, that he hath appointed the Ordinance for: As now, Suppose for Prayer; When we come to wait upon God in Prayer, we should come resting upon God, with an expectation to receive that from God which the Duty is appointed for. To pray in Faith, is not for a Man or Woman to believe, and be perswaded that he shall receive the particular thing that he prays for; No, we do but deceive our selves, if we think this be to pray in Faith. For we may pray in Faith, and yet not have the particular thing given that we pray for, as I could instance in several examples: But that shall not be my business now. But to pray in Faith, is only this, namely, to rely upon God, he being a God hearing prayer, that he would hear my

Prayer,

Jesus Christ. How? When I pray, I am to look to have access into the presence of God with my Prayers through him, and I am to expect assistance and strength from Jesus Christ to enable me to do it. And I am to look for assistance and acceptance of my Prayers that I have performed, only through Jesus Christ. And so I might shew you for hearing the Word. Tis a general Rule, we are to hear in Faith. How? Namely, to hear the Word in the Name of Jesus Christ. How is that? Thus to come and present ourselves in presence of God through Christ, in Obedience to his Will, that we may have access and stand in his presence in that Duty and Service through Jesus Christ; and to expect Grace and Strength from Christ, to enable me to attend unto the Word as I ought to do; without him I cannot hear as I should: but in hearing I shall not hear, if I have not strength from Christ to enable me; and when we have done, to look for acceptance through Christ, of the service that I have done. And so for partaking of the Lords Supper, we should do all in the Name of Christ; look for access into the presence of God in that Ordinance through Christ; look to have assistance to be carried on in the participation of that Ordinance by strength from Christ; and so look for acceptance of our participation of the Ordinance through Jesus Christ. That is the Forth General Rule.

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Prayer, and grant my Petitions so far as they are according to his Will, at his own time and leisure ; *O thou that hearest Prayer, Psal. 65. 2. to thee shall all flesh come.* His Faith was built upon that, that God was a God hearing Prayer ; and he relied upon God, and expected that God would answer his Prayer in his own time. And remember this, for it is a daily Duty that we are to perform; Though we may be Believers, and have an Habit of Holiness in us, yet if we do not act Faith in Prayer, our Prayer is not acceptable and pleasing unto God, because it is not done in Faith ; it must be a Prayer of Faith, as the Apostle *James* calls it, so to pray as to be persuaded to believe and rest upon God, that so far as my Prayer is according to his Will, he will hear and answer in his own time, and in his own way. And so for hearing of the Word, you may make use of this Rule, namely, to rest and wait upon the Lord, and expect something to be given out from the Lord in that very Ordinance, for which the Ordinance was appointed; namely, to hear something spoken from God to me, that I may be further acquainted withal: In *Act. 10. 33.* see what *Cornelius* speaks to *Peter* : *Peter* was sent from God to speak to him ; saies he, *We are all here present before God, to hear what God shall speak* : We are all here present before the Lord, expecting to have something spoken from the Lord. It is the Lords Ordinance, and we are to wait upon God in it, with an expectation to have something from God.

God. Alas! we come to hear the Word, and we may go away as we come, if we do not hear in Faith; we should come with an expectation to hear something from God. I will hearken to hear what God the Lord will speak to me; it is his Ordinance, and the way and means which God hath appointed to communicate of himself to us: and so we must rest and rely upon the Lord by Faith for something to be spoken, that may be of concernment to us. And so for receiving the Lords-Supper, this general Rule will help you in that; Come to that Ordinance, resting upon God in a way of Faith, expecting something from the Lord to be given out in that Ordinance, for which the Ordinance especially was appointed. And what is that? To have communion with Christ, and a communication and participation of the Blessings of Christ, of the Grace and Spirit of Christ. 1 Cor. 10. 16. saies the Apostle there, *The bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?* It was procured and purchased by Christ's Death and Bloodshed. Now then, I say, here is the Rule, When we come to a Duty and Ordinance, come in a way of resting and expectation to have something communicated to us from the Lord of the Ordinance, something of that which God hath appointed the Ordinance and Duty for. So now, you see here are five General Rules that may help us in the performance of Spiritual Duties, in a way of Faith, so as we may please God in them.

And,

And, O Brethren and Friends ! should any of us be willing to perform Duties and enjoy Ordinances in vain from day to day ? Why, as you have heard, if we go on not to act Faith in what we do, all will be in vain. And are you willing to be the worse for the Duties that you perform, and the Ordinances that you enjoy ? Truly, if we do not act Faith in them, we shall instead of being the better be the worse for them ; we cannot please God, but shall displease him more and more. And so, are we willing to meet with disappointments at last ? when we come to lie down upon our Sick-bed and Death-bed, and expect that we have been pleasing God by what we have done ; and we shall meet with a Disappointment, because we have done nothing in Faith, and so have not pleased God, but displeased him ? And are you willing to deceive your own Souls, as you have heard ? We may go on in the performance of Duties and Services, and steer a wrong Course, missing of Christ, if our Duties and Services be not touched with the Loadstone of Faith. Therefore, I say, Brethren, it is of concernment to us to consider these general Rules that have been given, to direct us how to perform Duties and enjoy Ordinances in a way of Faith, that so they may be pleasing unto God. There are particular Rules that I shall desire, if the Lord please, to lay down, How we may so pray in Faith that our Prayers may

may be pleasing unto God ; and then shew you , how we may hear the Word in Faith , that thereby we may please God , and profit our own Souls : And so come afterward to some other things, as the Lord gives opportunity.

But thus much for this time.

John 14: 26

SERMON

ON THE WORD OF GOD. WHICH IS THE WORD OF LIFE.

BY JAMES BISHOP OF LICHFIELD,
AND COVENTRY. AND OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

: 163

now bring a bold and glib tongue to your
brow, and talk of your own worth, and your
own merit, or of your own gifts, and your
own excellencies, and you will
be sure to be a very poor speaker.

SERMON VII.

Hebrews XI. 6.

*But without Faith it is impossible to please
him.*

Doct. **T**HIS is the truth and proposition before us *That it is impossible for any Soul to please God without Faith.*

The last time we came to enter upon some directions how we might so exercise Faith in the performance of Duties, and in the enjoyment of Ordinances, that so what we do might please God; some general Directions were laid down that may serve for all Duties; I shall now go on through the Lords assistance, and give you some more particular directions, how we may perform particular duties in Faith, that so they may be pleasing unto God.

1. And in the first place, we shall begin with the duty of Prayer, and shew you how we may so pray in Faith, as we may please God, for that is the Prayer that God doth accept;

cept; That is, a prayer of Faith: Therefore it is said, in *James* 5. 15. That the prayer of faith shall save the sick; That is, there must be Faith exercised in our prayers, or else our prayers are not true prayers, such as God accepts. Suppose a man be a Believer, and have a habit of Faith, he prays, yet if he do not exercise Faith in his prayer, he prays not the prayer of Faith, and it will not avail. *James* 1. 6, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God.* He must pray to God for it; but says he, *Let him pray in faith, for else if he do not pray in faith, his prayer will not avail.* And he speaks to those that are faithful, for he writes to the Twelve Tribes, amongst whom were many faithful and believers; *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God; but let him ask it in faith, nothing wavering;* for else his prayer is not pleasing to God; as the Apostle says in another case, *I Cor. 14. 19, I had rather speak five words with my understanding, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.* So I may say in this Case, a man had better put up five prayers in Faith, than Ten thousand prayers without Faith; and though we speak but a few words in prayer, if it be mixed with Faith, it is more available than if we speak never so many words never so largely without Faith.

Ques. Well, you will say, *How shall we so act faith in prayer, that our prayers may be pleasing unto God?*

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Answe. For Answer, Besides what was pre-supposed before, that the person must be a Believer, and also passing by those general Rules of direction laid down before, I shall give you four or five particular directions, how we should so pray in Faith, that our prayers may be pleasing unto God. Namely,

First, We should be sure of this, that whatsoever we do pray for, be according to the Will of God, be sure of that, be perswaded of that; you must not doubt nor question that, for if you do you cannot pray in Faith: And tho' the thing you pray for be according to the Will of God, yet if you do not know and be perswaded that it is according to the Will of God, you cannot pray in Faith; therefore we must be sure of that, that the thing we pray for be according to the Will of God, as the Apostle faith concerning eating, in *Rom. 14. v. last*, *He that doubteth is damned if he eateth*; That is, he committeth a damnable sin because he believeth not; for whatsoever is not of Faith is sin. So he that prays doubtingly, whether the thing he prays for be according to the Will of God or no, he sins in prayer, whatever he pray for, if it be not in Faith, with a perswasion that what he prays for is according to the Will of God, this man cannot pray in Faith. Suppose now a man or woman pray for this or that, that he carnot certainly conclude is according to the Will of God, as now for example, suppose a man have an earnest desire to encrease his estate in the World, that he may

may live bravely at his ease and pleasure, and to that end he desires to be diligent in his business, and to that end also he begs of the Lord in prayer, that the Lord would bless his labours and endeavours, that he might gain a great estate in the world, and do what he list; and live at his ease and pleasure; now, this man cannot pray with a certain assurance and persuasion that this thing is according to the Will of God; *Ye ask and have not*, says the Apostle *James, because ye ask amiss, to spend upon your lusts, James 4. 3.* It is not according to the Will of God, and therefore you cannot pray in Faith. Or suppose now that a man or woman intend to take a Journey upon pleasure, to have a Ramble abroad, he would be glad to be preserved, and possibly he prays that the Lord would keep him in his way; now if a person in this case do question whether his Journey be according to the Will of God, he cannot pray in Faith, and so his prayer is not pleasing to the Lord: Or suppose a man be gaming for money, and he would be glad to win, possibly he prays that the Lord would bless him in his undertaking, that he might win, he cannot be persuaded this is according to the Will of God, and if so, he cannot pray in Faith, and so his prayer is not pleasing unto God: So that, I say, this is the particular direction in this case, That whatsoever we pray for, we must be sure of that, that it is according to the Will of God; and this is a good help to pray in

Faith; says the Apostle *John*, in *1 John 5.14*, *This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will be bear-
ed us.* You must be sure of that, that it is according to the Will of God, and then we may believe that he will hear us. Now, I pray consider this, a thing may be agreeable to the revealed Will of God, and yet not according to his secret Will and Purpose; and though the purpose of God be against what we pray for, yet if it be according to the revealed Will of God, we may lawfully pray in Faith for it. As now, suppose a man or woman pray for the life of such a Relation, a Husband, or a Wife, or a Child, or a Friend, he prays earnestly for their life; well, God in his secret purpose hath determined otherwise, the secret Will of God is contrary, yet this being lawful according to the revealed Will of God, to pray for the welfare of the sick, he may pray in Faith, though it be contrary to the secret Purpose and Counsel of God. You know this was *David's* case, he prayed earnestly for his sick Child, the Lord had a secret purpose that the Child should dye, yet he prayed earnestly for the life of the Child, and he did not sin in praying, because it was according to the revealed Will of God; and though it was contrary to the secret Will of God, yet notwithstanding, he might pray in Faith for the life of the Child, though God had intended otherwise. You know it was the case of Christ himself, he

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prayed that the Cup might pass from him; it was the determinate Purpose and Counsel of God that the Cup should not pass from him, but he should drink it. Now, did Christ sin in praying for that which was contrary to the secret Will and Purpose of God? No. Because now this is certain, that it is a thing that is lawful, and according to the Will of God, for a Man or Woman to pray against that which is dangerous and hurtful to his nature; he may pray lawfully to be delivered from evil. Now Christ prayed to be delivered from evil, from drinking the Cup of Gods Wrath, though it was the secret Counsel of God he should drink it, yet notwithstanding he did not sin, because he prayed for that which he knew was according to the revealed Will of God. Well, this is the first Direction, and I pray mind it, That if you would pray in Faith for any mercy, let us be sure of that, that what we pray for be according to the Will of God.

Secondly, The second Direction, To pray in Faith, so as that we may please God, is to pray in obedience to the Will of God; do it in obedience to the Will and Command of God as our Duty. Brethren, it is the Will and Command of God, and our Duty, that we should pray always, in *Psalm 105. 4.* *Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face evermore.* So, you know, in *Luke 18. 1.* he propounded a Parable to his Disciples, to the end, that Men should always pray and not

saint. It is the Will of God that we should pray always ; now to help us to pray in Faith, it is good to be Eying our Duty and the Lords Command; it is the Lords Command that we shold pray, notwithstanding we may meet with discouragements, objections ; and temptations from the Flesh and from Satan, to take us off from the Duty ; as now, the Flesh and Satan will be ready to suggest and discourage, thus, why , What benefit have you by all the Prayers that ever you have made ? What have you found in a way of answer to your Prayer ? and again, do you not see that others that do not pray at all, fare even as well as you, for all your praying ? and again, can we change the Mind and Will of God by all our Prayers ? It is said in *Job*, that God is of one mind, and who can turn him ? Can all the prayers of all the Saints and Angels in Heaven and Earth change the Mind and Will of God ? But now, Faith will help a Soul to go over all these Objections ; it is my Duty, and I will do it in Obedience to the Will of God, notwithstanding this, or that, or the other Temptation; God hath commanded me to pray evermore, and Pray without ceasing ; and that I should pray and not faint ; possibly Satan will come with his Temptations and Objections, Do you not see that God seems to be angry, and offended with your Prayers ? God seems to answer you contrary to your Prayers ? then to what end is it for you to pray ? Yet Faith will help a Soul

Soul to answer all, with this, It is my Duty, it is Gods command, and therefore I will do it. For Faith does carry a Soul beyond Difficulties and Objections; As you see it was with *Abraham*, his Faith carried him beyond all his carnal reasonings and objections: As when God called him to go out of his Native Country into a place that he knew not, and it may be scarce ever heard of in all his Life, Flesh and Blood now, and the Devil, would be ready to make Objections, What shall a Man venture to go he knows not whither? But now Faith helped him to go on, therefore it is said in *Hebrews* 11. 8. *By Faith, Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which he should afterward receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went.* He went, because of the Command of God, in obedience to the call of God. So when *Abraham* was called to a hard piece of Service, to offer up *Isaac*, here might have been a Temptation, What, shall I go and cut the Throat of him in whom all the promises are to be performed? From *Isaac* Christ was to come; and God had told *Abraham*, that in him all the Families of the Earth should be blessed; yet go saies God, and sacrifice your Son. Here was the command, *Abraham* goes, notwithstanding all the Cavils and objections of carnal reason, *Abraham* goes about it in obedience to the command of God. Brethren, take this as another direction to help us to pray in Faith, notwithstanding the objections and Temptations

that may take us off ; it is our duty , here is the Command of God for it, and out of obedience to Gods Command I will do it , whatever come of it, You read in the 5th of *Luke*, the beginning , that *Peter* had been Fishing all Night, and had Caught nothing; in the Morning Christ stood upon the shore and called to him ; saies he, *Cast your Net on the Right side of the Ship* : Sir, saies he, we have been labouring and toiling all Night, and have caught nothing, it is but a vain thing: But yet he did recollect himself , nevertheless at thy Command we will do it; and thereupon casting out the Net upon Christ's command, they had a very great Draught, in so much that they were Amazed. Well, this is the second direction to help us to pray in Faith, to pray in Obedience to the Lords Will.

Thirdly, The third Direction is this ; namely, to be eying of the Lords Promise, and to pray by vertue of some promise or other, and this will mightily strengthen and help Faith in Prayer : If a Soul have but a promise to encourage him in Prayer, by this means the Soul will come to see, as through a Crevice, the Willingness of God to hear him, and answer him.

The Soul may,possibly, scruple and Question, But if I pray, will the Lord hear me ? But if the Soul comes in the vertue of a promise, he comes with a great encouragement and perswasion that God will hear him. Now, Brethren, for your help in this thing, in pray-

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ing by virtue of some promise, understand and know, that there are two sorts of promises, there are some more general promises concerning Gods hearing Prayer, and then there are some more particular promises concerning some particular Mercy or Blessing that we pray for. Now, as for the general promises, the Scripture is full of them, that God is a God hearing prayer, in *Psalm 65. 2.* *O thou that hearest Prayer, unto thee shall all Flesh come.* God is a God hearing Prayer, for the encouragement of all Flesh to come unto him. So in *Psalm 86. 4,5.* *Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my Soul, for thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, and Plenteous in Mercy unto all them that call upon thee.* Here is a general promise; so in *Psalm 102. 17.* *He will regard the Prayer of the Destitute, and not despise their Prayer.* And in *Psalm 145. 8.* *The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, that call upon him in Truth;* *He is nigh them to hear their Prayer.* So in the New-Testament, saies Christ, in *Matt. 7. 7,8.* *Ask, and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you;* *for every one that asketh receiveth, &c.* And so you have such expressions frequently up and down in the Scripture, that are general promises to encourage the Soul in Prayer; as the Apostle saith, in *Rom. 10. 12.* *The same Lord over all, is Rich unto all that call upon him.* Such general promises you have frequently in the Scripture; and then there are some more particular promises about Gods hearing Prayer,

er, as now, for some particular Mercy or Blessing that a Man or Woman may stand in need of, there are some particular promises that suits them more particularly. As you know, *Jacob* he makes use of that, *Lord, saies he, Thou hast said that thou wouldest do me good.* When he was in danger by his Brother *Esau*, in *Gen. 32. 9, 10, 11.* *Lord, saies he, Thou hast said that thou wouldest do me good.* God had promised to bless him, and he makes use of that promise, and strengthens his Faith in his Prayer by that Argument. And so *David*, in *2 Sam. 7.* there you may read how the Lord made a gracious promise to *David* and his House, to establish the Throne to him and his posterity, that his posterity should succeed him in his Throne; *David* would have built God a House; *Well, saies God, wilt thou build me a House; I will build thy House for thee.* There was a Gracious promise; well, *David* makes use of this promise in the latter end of the Chapter, verse, *27 For thou, O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed unto thy Servant, saying, I will build thee an House, therefore hath thy Servant found in his Heart to pray this Prayer unto thee, &c.* So *Jehoshaphat*, in *2 Chron. 20.* having his Land invaded by a Foreign Enemy, he goes to God in Prayer; but mark how he eyes a promise in his Prayer, vers. *8, 9. And have built thee a Sanctuary therein for thy name, saying, If when evil cometh upon us, as the Sword, Judgement, or Pestilence, or Famine, we stand before this House, and in*

in thy presence (for thy Name is in this House) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt bear and help, &c. He takes hold of the promise of God, and pleads that in his Prayer, and so prevails. So I might instance in others, sometimes God casts in a promise, gives some secret hint of a promise in Prayer: As Paul, he had that promise, when he was afflicted with the Thorn in the Flesh, and a Messenger of Satan to buffet him, God told him, that *his Grace should be sufficient for him, 2 Cor. 12. 9.* And he makes use of that, and gathers strength from it. But Suppose, now, a man or woman have no particular promise to strengthen his Faith in Prayer, then let him eye some general promise or other, and this will be a mighty encouragement and strengthning, and help to Faith in prayer, to encline the Heart to be perswaded that God is willing, because of such general promises: Or suppose that any Man or Woman have no promise to lay hold upon, or to act Faith in Prayer upon, then,

Fourthly, In the Fourth place, take a fourth direction, and that is, to eye the Name of God; the Attributes of God they are called the Name of God, thereby God doth discover himself and his nature to us, and plead by vertue of some attribute of God, the Name of God; for sometimes a Believer may be in the dark, and may not have the light of so much as any one promise to make use of. Now, you know what the Holy-Ghost faith in *Isaiah 5.10.* Who

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his Servant, that walketh in Darkness, and sees no light, not the light of any Promise, let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God; let him make use of the Name of God to strengthen his Faith. The Saints and People of God have been wont to plead for the Name of God, and the Glory of Gods Name; that you find frequently in the Scripture, in *Jeremiah* 14. 7. *O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy Name-sake.* So in the *Psalm* frequently, in *Psalm* 25. 11. *For thy Name-sake, Oh Lord, Pardon my iniquity, for it is great.* But more particularly, eye some Attribute of God, some particular Name of God, as I may so call it, for God is made known and discovered to us by his attributes, and the properties of his Name; now let us eye some Attribute of God that may be helpful to us in Prayer, as now the Power of God, it is very useful to eye the Power of God in Prayer; and so you will find the Saints have made use of the power of God, that was put forth in the Creation of the World; I remember *Jeremiah* Chapter 32. when the Children of *Israel* were to go into Captivity for seventy years, the Lord bad *Jeremiah* to buy the Field of his Uncle, for an evidence that God would bring his people back again. *Jeremiah*, when he had done, he would fall to Prayer, and he makes use of the power of God at the 17th verse, *Oh Lord God, behold, thou hast made*

made the Heavens and Earth by thy great Power, and stretched out Arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee. It is a hard thing for Flesh and Blood to believe that I and my posterity shall have this Land again; but there is nothing too hard for thee, God can easily bring them back again from their long Captivity: so you may see how Moses did eye the Power of God, in Numbers 14. 17, 18. *And now, I beseech thee, let the Power of my Lord be great according as thou hast spoken, &c.* He urges the greatness of Gods Power; and so *Jeboſaphat*, in that Prayer of his, 2 Chron. 20. 6. *Ob Lord, saies he, art not thou God in Heaven, and ruleſt not thou over all the Kingdoms of the Heathen, and in thine Hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?* And so *Asa*, when he also was in the like distress, when his Land was invaded, 2 Chron. 14. 11. he cried to the Lord, and mark how he eyed the Power of God; And he said, *Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with a many, or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord, our God, for we rest on thee, and in thy Name we go against this Multitude.* And so, if you observe, when Christ gives us directions to pray, in that which is called the Lords Prayer, still in our prayer we are to eye the Power of God, *For thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory.* Still eye the Glory of Gods Power, and this is more helpful to Faith than we are aware of; you know, when many came to Christ in their distresses, when he was here upon Earth, for help, the poor Leper,

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when he came to Christ, he came with this, *Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean, Mat. 8.2.* And saies Christ to the Father of the Child that was posleſt, when he came to him to cast out the Devil, *Canſt thou believe, saies Christ, that I am able to do this?* because he questioned the Power of Christ, *Mark 9.22. Lord if thou canſt do any thing, have compassion on us and help us,* (saies Christ) *if thou canſt believe, all things are poſſible to him that believeth;* *Verse 23.* He would have him to eye his Power, and the eying of the Power of God doth wonderfully strengthen Faith, and enable us to pray in Faith. And so again, eye the mercy, and goodness, and kindness, and grace, and compassion of God in Prayer, and that will help us in our prayers, strengthen Faith in the Mercy of God. You read of it frequently in the *Psalms*, how *David* made use of that in his Prayer, *For thy mercy sake deliver me, and have mercy upon me, according to the multitude of thy tender Mercies,* *Psal. 51. 1.* So *Moses* in *Numb. 14. 17, 18.* He argues the Cause with God in his Prayer, upon the account of his Mercy, *Let the Power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, the Lord is long suffering, and of great Mercy, forgiving iniquity,* &c. *Verse 19.* Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this People, according to the greatness of thy Mercy. This is now the fourth direction to help us to pray in Faith, namely, to eye the Name of God, the Glory of his Name, some of his Glorious Attributes, and plead the vertue of them. To name but one more:

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*Fiftiby, To pray in Faith, is to pray with a hope and expectation of an audience of our prayers ; there is much lies in this , many pray, and pray , and never look after their Prayers ; they pray without any hope or expectation of Gods hearing and answering their Prayers. Now, I say, we should pray with hope and expectation , waiting for an answer of our Prayers from the Lord one way or other, in the Lords own way ; for sometimes the Lord may answer us in a way that we could not expect,not in that particular thing that we pray for : As *David* saies, in *Psal. 35.13.* *But as for me, when they were sick, my cloathing was Sackcloth, I bumbled my Soul with fasting, and my Prayer returned into mine own Bosom.* There was an answer, but not a particular answer to what he Prayed for ; yet he had an answer : so God may answer our Prayer, and we should pray , hoping and waiting, and expecting an answer; for Faith doth help us so to act, to look up and wait. In *Psalm 5. 3.* saies *David, My voice shalt thou hear, in the morning, Oh Lord, in the Morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.* I will look after it,says he, and wait for some answer or other ; There are many that commonly put up their Prayers Morning and Evening, and turn their Backs, and never mind what answer God will give them ; this is not to pray in Faith; Faith doth help a Soul to look up, and wait for an answer one way or other, at one time or another. In *Habakkuk 2.1.* He had been making his Prayer unto*

unto God in the former Chapter, and now saies he, *I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the Tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I be reproved; and then verse 3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lye, though it tarry: wait for it.* Ah ! Brethren, there is more in this than we are aware of, namely, to wait in hope and expectation of an answer of our Prayers one way or other in the Lords time, this we may expect. God having revealed and made known himself to be a God hearing Prayer, and he hath not said to the seed of *Jacob*, seek ye me in vain. Now, the Soul may draw near to God in Prayer, with hopes and expectations that God being a God hearing prayer, will one way or other hear and answer my Prayers ; look for it and expect it.

And, Brethren, this waiting and expecting an Audience and answer of our Prayers from God, doth, as it were, lay an ingagement upon God to answer our Prayers. As now, if a man knows that another trusts in him for a thing, it does lay an ingagement upon him to be the more careful to do it ; So now, when a Soul doth trust in the Lord, and rely upon him, expecting Audience, because he hath declared himself to be a God hearing Prayer, now God is ingaged as it were to answer thee; saies *David*, in Psalm 9, 10. *Thou Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.* The Lord will not forsake them that seek ; we may forsake our Prayers when

when we have made them, but the Lord will not forsake them that seek him; as he saies again, in *Psalms* 34. the last Verse, *None of them that trust in him shall be desolate*. God is a God hearing Prayer, therefore none that trust in him shall be desolate; thus we are to wait for, and expect an answer of our Prayers, and God will hear us. And thus now you have had some few Directions given and laid down to help us to pray in Faith; and Brethren, by thus Praying in Faith we shall avail much, this is the prevailing Prayer, and without Faith we cannot expect to prevail.

Quest. But you will say to me, The Truth is, I hope I have Prayed in Faith, I have been perswaded that what I have Prayed for hath been according to the Will of God, and I have Prayed out of Obedience to the Command of God, and I have had an eye to the promise, &c. And yet I do not find any answer of my Prayer, and therefore I have cause to question whether ever I have Prayed in Faith or no: *How shall I know whether my Prayer have been a Prayer of Faith or no?* This question is of very great concernment; I shall briefly speak something to it:

First, Negatively, To pray in Faith, is not for a Soul to be perswaded and assured that the particular thing that I pray for I shall have, though many do mis-apprehend it, and think this is to pray in Faith, to pray with an assurance that I shall have the particular thing I pray for; no, there may be a great delusion in this: as I knew a professor once, a Woman, and

I hope a godly Woman, she was carried away with this delusion and conceit, *I know*, saies she, *that I shall have this thing, and the other thing; I know I shall have my Father and Mother come to me from another Country; why, said the Party to her? why*, said she, *the promise is, that whatsoever I ask in Prayer, believing, I shall receive, and, says she, I have Prayed for it, and I do believe I shall have it.* They perswaded her it was but a deceit; *no, no*, saies she, *I am confident of it.* But a short time after she fell into a frenzy and madness; but yet she recovered again afterward, and I hope she was a godly woman, possibly yet living; but I speak of it for this, to shew you that this is not to pray in Faith, to be assured that what I pray for shall be given me; a Man or Woman possibly may not have the thing they pray for, or may not have a perswasion of the thing to be granted, and yet may pray in Faith. I pray did not our Lord Christ himself pray that the Cup might pass from him? And did not he pray in Faith? and was not he heard? *Father I thank thee*, saies he, *that thou hearest me always, John 11. 46.* He prayed that the Cup might pass from him, he had not the particular thing that he Prayed for, and yet he was heard, and did pray in Faith for all that; so that, I say, people may delude themselves, and think this is to pray in Faith, when we are perswaded that we shall have the paritcular thing granted we pray for; no, this is not to pray in Faith; a man may pray in Faith, though the

the thing be not granted at present; nay, though it never be granted. You will say then, How shall I know whether I pray in Faith or no, though the thing be never granted that I pray for? I shall briefly speak three or four things to this, and so wind up all.

First of all, Observe I pray, when the Heart is brought to be subject to the Will of God, and to submit to his dispose; when the Heart is brought after Prayer, or upon Prayer, to submit to the Will of God, possibly the Soul hath met with some great Cross and affliction, or some great loss, possibly of a near and dear Relation, the Soul it may be is mightily troubled about it, and now goes to God in Prayer, and commits its self and its case to God by Prayer, and possibly now the Soul is made to submit to the Will of God, the Soul comes to argue and reason thus: The Lord is wiser than I, and the Lord hath an absolute power over me, and he may do every thing, and it is fit that his Will should be done, and hereby the Heart comes to be quiet and made submissive to the Will of God; this argues now, that the Soul hath been praying in Faith, and God hath heard his Prayer, though he give him not the particular thing he prays for; yet he is made to submit to the Will of God. This was just the case of Christ, Christ prayed that the Cup might pass from him, the Cup did not pass from him, yet in his Prayer he was brought to submit to the Will of God, *Nevertheless, not my will, but thy will be done.* So

possibly the Soul could not be satisfied with the dispensation of God, he comes and commends himself and his case to the Lord, and upon Prayer the Soul is brought to submit to the Will of God, and to say, *not my will, but thy will be done.* This is the first.

Secondly, When the Soul is brought into a composed frame upon Prayer, possibly the Soul was all in a hurry and royl, before it met with something that was matter of affliction and perplexity, and it was like the raging Sea, the Soul could not rest night nor day ; well, when this Soul comes and commits its self, and case, and condition to the Lord in Prayer, and now there is a great calm and quiet in the heart, and all is allayed on a sudden ; here is now the Power of Faith, the spirit of Faith hath prevailed, and God hath come in and answered that Prayer, tho' not in the same kind and way that the Soul desired ; yet it is a sign it is a Prayer of Faith, and God hath answered it, because now the heart is quieted and composed after such a storm. This was the case of *Hannah*, *Hannah* was in a royle at first, when she was upbraided for barrenness ; she goes and commends her Case to the Lord ; before she told *Ely*, she was a woman of a troubled spirit, *1 Sam. 1. 15*, *I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord.* And when she had gone before the Ark, and commended her self and case to the Lord by Prayer, it is said, at *Verse 18*. That
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she went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad. And so likewise this was David's case, David was exceedingly troubled, and perplexed, and disquieted, because of the sickness of his Child, 2 Sam. 12. He fasted and prayed earnestly a long time; and though the Child died, yet David's spirit was calm and composed; and when he heard the Child was dead, then he anointed himself, *vers. 20.* and went into the House of the Lord and worshipped, and he went also into his own House, and did eat and drink as he used to do, to the wonderment of his Servants about him; God had composed his heart, and though he had not the thing he prayed for, yet he had his Prayer answered, and his Prayer was a prayer of Faith.

Object. But you will say, *May not another that hath no faith at all, pray and find his spirit quiet? how is this then the work of faith? one that never had any faith at all, possibly he may pray and have his spirit quiet, and is never troubled at all; wherein lies the difference?*

Ans^w. Mark, I pray, such a one that is not at all troubled about his condition, he is after Prayer just as he was before.

Now, I say, this is an evidence that Faith hath been at work upon the heart, namely, when the spirit was all in a royle and commotion like the raging Sea, and then upon Prayer it is calmed and quieted, this is an argument that this Prayer is a prayer of Faith.

Thirdly, It is an argument that a Soul prays in Faith, when as the Soul is made to persevere in Prayer, notwithstanding the discouragements and difficulties it meets withal: for this is the proper work and effect of Faith, to go on against discouragements, and not to be taken off by difficulties. As now, the woman that had the bloody Issue, she would fain have come to Christ, but she met with impediments, there was a great throng about him that she could not tell how to get near him; but her Faith did carry her on against all the discouragements and impediments that she met withal; she would press into the throng, and if she could but touch the Garment of Christ, she would be satisfied; the throng should not keep her from Christ, *Mark 5. 28.* And so the blind man, in *Mark 10. 46;* &c. that sate by the way-side begging, he heard that Jesus was passing by, and he cryed out, *Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me;* and he made such a noise that the people were offended at him, and charged him to hold his peace; and it is said, *vers. 18.* That he cryed out a great deal more, and Christ took notice of his Prayer, and called him to him, and said, *What wilt thou, that I should do to thee?* *verse 51.* Lord, said he, *that I might receive my sight.* Go thy way, says Christ, *thy faith hath made thee whole.* It was a prayer of Faith, and Christ did hear it, and he was kept on praying against discouragements and impediments that he met with. And so the woman

of *Canaan* came to Christ for her Daughter, *Matt. 15*. she intreats Christ to have Mercy upon her, Christ turns a deaf ear to her, and answers her never a word; she goes on still, and Christ denies her, *I am not sent*, says he; *but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. Here was discouragement upon discouragement; she goes on still, and says Christ, *It is not meet to take the Childrens bread and cast it to dogs*. Yet she would not be discouraged, but went on till she had obtained the Mercy. So, I say, when a Soul is drawn out to go on in Prayer, notwithstanding discouragements, and objections, and temptations to the contrary, it is an argument that it is a Prayer of Faith, and God will hear it, and answer it in his own time.

4. I might have added a fourth, which is this, namely, when a Soul is made to wait upon God still, for an answer and return of his Prayer, though the Soul have not yet an answer, and doth not meet with a return, yet notwithstanding, the Soul is made to wait and to go on in waiting, to wait and to persevere in waiting, truly this is an argument that that Prayer is a prayer of Faith; when the Soul is made willing to wait the Lords time, and the Lords way for an answer of that he prays for and expects, this is an argument of the exercise of Faith. Says *David*, when the Lord had promised him to give him the Kingdom; *Saul* was then alive, and he sought *David's* life; *David* sometimes had *Saul* at an advan-

stage, as in 1 Sam. 26. and one of his Worthies that was with him, said to him, at ver. 8. *God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day; now, therefore, let me smite him, I pray thee with the spear, even to the earth at once, &c.* No, says David, stay the Lords time, vers. 9. 10, 11. *Destroy him not. As the Lord liveth the Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come to dye; or he shall descend into battel and perish. The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lords anointed.* And so for a deliverance out of danger, Faith doth help a Soul to go on, to persevere in waiting for it till the Lords time. Says David, in Psal. 40. 1, 2. *I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry; he brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock.* Here was a prayer of Faith, he was willing to wait the Lords time, and the Lord did hear him: And thus now you see here are some symptoms whereby we may discern whether we pray in Faith or no. Now, Brethren, you have heard this particular thing spoken to, namely, how we should so pray in Faith, that our prayers may be pleasing unto God. What shall we think then of those that do not pray at all? Nay, what may they think of themselves? if those that pray and do not exercise Faith do not please God, what do those do then that neglect prayer, that cast off prayer, and restrain prayer? or else do it by fits and starts, when they have nothing else to do? They restrain

Family-Prayer, and Closet-Prayer, what shall we think of them? do these please God? or do they not go on in a way of displeasing God from day to day, provoking the Lord to pour out his wrath upon them? If there be any such here, let them not go on any longer thus to provoke the Lord. But, Brethren and beloved, now that we have heard these directions about praying in Faith, let none of us satisfie our selves with the hearing of these things, but let us now endeavour to walk according to the Directions presented before us. Do you not desire to please God in your praying, or else what do you pray for? Well, would you not have your Prayers displeasing unto God day by day? then be careful to pray in Faith; and to that end, remember these Directions that I have now laid before you: And thus now I have done with this particular concerning praying in Faith.

It remains that we give you some Directions about exercising Faith in hearing of the Word, and then to shew you how to partake of the Lords-Supper in Faith, and then I may speak something by way of direction, how we may exercise Faith in the businesses and concernments of this life, in the matters of our particular calling; for every thing must be done in Faith: *For without faith it is impossible to please God.*

But thus much shall suffice for this time.

SER-

Heb xi. 6. But without Faith it is impossible to please him

SERMON VIII.

But without Faith it is impossible to please him

Hebxi. 6.

But without Faith it is impossible to please him

It is impossible for any Soul to please God without Faith.

This is the Subject we have been about, and shall now, through the Lords assistance, proceed in. The last time I gave you some Directions how we should exercise Faith in Prayer, so as we may please God; I shall now, through the Lords assistance, proceed, and come to lay down some directions, how we may come to exercise Faith in hearing the Word of God, that so we may please God: For though we should hear the Word of the Lord never so often, yet if we do not exercise Faith in our hearing, we do not please God in it. It is not enough that a man or woman have Faith in the habit, the Grace of Faith in his heart, whilst he is hearing the Word, but it is requisite unto our pleasing of God

God

God in hearing his Word, that we act and exercise Faith. Says the Apostle, in *Heb. 4. 2.* *For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them.* Why not? why did not the Word Preached profit them? He gives this as the Reason of it, *not being mixed with faith*, says he, *in them that heard it.* They did not exercise Faith in hearing the Word, therefore they did not profit by hearing, for want of mixing Faith with it: The word that is translated *mixed*, it signifies an incorporation, or a Composition, as it were, as there is in putting ingredients into a Potion. As now, suppose in a Potion, if there want some special ingredient that is requisite to it, the Potion will do little good, nay, possibly it may do a great deal of hurt, it may not only not profit, but it may prejudice, it may be very hurtful. Truly, so this Faith is a special ingredient to our hearing the Word of God; now, if this be wanting, this acting and exercising of Faith in hearing the Word, we may be much prejudiced; it is of great concernment for people to be acting and exercising of Faith in hearing the Word. I do not deny, but God may sometimes, and doth ordinarily by the Word work Faith in those that were not Believers before; for *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*, *Rom. 10. 17.* Yet notwithstanding we cannot say, though God may please to work Faith in those that have no Faith, by hearing the Word, yet we cannot say

say that their hearing the Word that have no Faith, is pleasing unto God, or that they do please God in their hearing ; no, the Text seems to speak the contrary ; the Text says, that *without faith it is impossible to please God*. And truly this may be the great wound, the great sore upon people, the great impediment and hindrance, and reason why people hear much, and profit so little, for want of exercising Faith in hearing.

Ques. You will say then, *How shall we so act and exercise faith in our hearing the word, that our hearing may be pleasing unto God, and profitable unto us?*

Answ. In answer to this, I shall come directly to lay down some Directions about hearing the Word of the Lord in a way of Faith, that so our hearing the Word may be pleasing unto God :

And first of all, we must be sure of this, to be perswaded upon good grounds, that those that we do hear dispensing the Word be called and sent by Christ to Preach, or else we cannot hear them in Faith; some may Preach, and yet were never sent, as the Lord saith in *Jer. 23. 21. I have not sent these Prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.* A man may come that hath good parts, and Preach the Word, and yet may not be sent by the Lord ; and if he be not sent by the Lord, truly then we cannot hear in Faith; and if we be not perswaded that he is sent by Christ, and called by Christ to Preach

Preach and dispense the Gospel, we cannot depend upon it as an Ordinance of God, we cannot expect the presence of Christ, we cannot expect the blessing of Christ upon his Preaching. There are Two things therefore that we are to attend to here :

1. That those that we hear Preach the Gospel, be sent and called by Christ to Preach. And

2. We must be perswaded that they are sent and called by Christ to Preach, or else we cannot hear them in Faith ; if we be not perswaded that they are called and sent by Christ. What the Apostle speaks concerning eating of meats, in *Rom. 14. 23.* he would have people perswaded in their minds ; for says he, *He that doubteth, or he that questions whether it be lawful or no, he is damned if he eat.* That is, he ventures upon a sin that does deserve damnation. So, in this case, for hearing, if we be not perswaded that such a one that we hear, be sent by Christ, we cannot hear the Word in Faith. And to this purpose, I pray consider that place in *Rom. 10. 14. 15.* *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed ? and how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard ? and how shall they hear without a Preacher ? and how shall they Preach except they be sent ?* Sent by whom ? by Christ, they must be called and sent by Christ. How can we hear them except they be sent ? Why, cannot we hear a man except he be sent ? No, not lawfully ; we cannot hear

hear him in Faith, if we be not perwaded that he is sent by Christ.

Object. But you will say, Suppose now that one that bath parts and abilities come and Preach the Truth, that which is sound Doctrine, may we not bear him? is it not lawful to bear him? Is it not sufficient if he be a man of abilities, and do Preach sound Doctrine? what shall we need to scruple to bear him?

Answe. For answer, Suppose now that an Idolatrous Mass-Priest should come and Preach sound Doctrine, Orthodox Truths to a people, do you think now that such a one is sent by Christ? do you think that you may stand lawfully, and attend upon his ministry as an ordinance of Christ, not being sent by Christ? Nay, I will say further, The Devil himself may Preach the Truth, and yet notwithstanding, not being sent by Christ, we are not to hear him. In *Luke 4. 33, 34.* the Devil there he would be Preaching of Christ, what he said was Truth, *I know thee who thou art, the Holy one of God.* But Christ would not suffer him, in vers. 35. *And Jesus rebuked him, saying, hold thy Peace.* He would silence him, this is that which possibly very few have minded in former times, but have gone on in hearing one and other without making any Question whether they were sent by Christ or no; but I say, we cannot act in Faith if we should go on thus, if we be not perwaded that they are called and sent by Christ.

Quest. But you will say further, *How can poor weak*

weak People, that are weak in understanding, how can they discern and understand whether Ministers be called and sent by Christ or no? Alas! this is a hard thing for us to discern, and therefore it is somewhat too hard to impose upon us, that we must be perswaded that they are sent by Christ, or else we cannot lawfully hear them?

Answe. Brethren, I suppose it is not so hard and difficult a thing to know whether a Minister be sent by Christ or no; briefly thus, Christ he ordinarily sends one of these two ways, those whom he would have to Preach in his name, either

1. In a way of institution or appointment in the way of his Ordinance; namely thus, when a Church of Christ following the Rules and Directions that Christ doth give in his Word, doth chuse and call such a one that is so and so qualified, and in such a way, according to those Rules set him a-part for the work of Christ; this is now according to Christ's institution and Ordinance, here is one that is called by Christ to Preach and dispense the Gospel.

2. There is another way whereby Christ may also call, namely, a providential way, in the way of his Providence, when as a people finding and discerning a person qualified and gifted for such a work, do thereupon call him and desire him to Preach to them; here is now a providential call, and Christ by this Providence doth call him, and send him,

as

as we read in *Acts* 13. 15. Paul, there, went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, and set down, and after the reading of the Law and of the Prophets, the Rulers of the Synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. Here was now a providential call, being desired by the people. So, says the Apostle, in *Acts* 16. when he was doubtful which way to go to Preach, at *vers. 6. 7.* they would have gone to this place, and the other, but the spirit hindred them. At last, at *v. 9. 10.* *A vision appeared to Paul in the night, and there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering, that the Lord had called us to preach the Gospel unto them.* Why, here was a beck of providence, and here was a call by the people, and God did discover it in a Vision; so that one of these two ways God doth ordinarily now adays call Ministers to Preach the Gospel. Now, this is easie to be discerned, and therefore we are to be fully perswaded in our minds, that such as we go to hear, are called and sent by Christ to Preach the Gospel, or else we cannot attend upon it as an Ordinance of Christ, nor expect the blessing of Christ upon it.

Object. But you will say further, *But have not good Christians heretofore, godly people, been wont to attend upon such as did Preach sound Doctrine*

et cetera

ctrine without questioning their call? They never doubted whether they were sent by Christ or no; but heard them, and the Lord was pleased also to bless their hearing, that they profited by their hearing; therefore why should we need to scruple and question whether we may not hear one as well as another?

Ans^w. Brethren, for this, I may say as the Apostle said in another case, *Act 17. 30.* The times of this ignorance God winked at, when he suffered them to go on in their erroneous ways: in times of ignorance God winketh at: But now, says he, he commandeth all men every where to repent and reform. So now, there being a further light, though God might wink at former ignorance, yet now he calls upon all to consider and understand whom they hear, and what they hear, and upon what grounds those that come to Preach the Gospel to us, come; we know that in point of worship there are many things that were heretofore practiced by the people of God; and yet notwithstanding their former practises, do not make those things to be lawful to us now; as there were many things about the Government and Order of the Church that formerly Christians have yielded too, and yet we cannot so freely and so safely with a good Conscience yield to them; and though good Christians have formerly yielded to them, yet that doth not make it to be warrantable and lawful for us. But in a word, do we believe? are we persuaded that whatsoever is not of Faith

is sin? If we be not fully perswaded of the lawfulness of a thing, and yet do it, it is sin? And do we believe what the Text saith here, That *without faith it is impossible to please God*? Then if so be that we have not Faith to persuade us, that such as do Preach are sent by Christ, then I think we cannot act Faith in hearing the Word from them. This is the first Direction about hearing in Faith, namely, that we be perswaded that those that we do hear be called and sent by Christ.

2. A second Direction how to act Faith in hearing the Word, is this, namely, we should be careful to remove all impediments that may hinder us in our hearing, from enjoying the presence of Christ, and our profiting by the Word; for this is the work of Faith, to put us upon the use of all lawful means to attain an end; Faith will not expect the end but upon the use of means. And so on the other side, as it is the work of Faith to put us upon the use of means for the attaining of the end, so to avoid all the impediments and hindrances that lye in the way to the attaining of the end; when the Lord called *Jacob* to go to *Bethel*, Gen. 35. 1, 2, 3. that he might worship God there; now, *Jacob*, that he might enjoy the presence of God, and Communion with God in *Bethel*, in his drawing near to God there, *Jacob* he removes impediments; now he calls upon his household and all that were with him to put away the strange gods from among them, and be clean, says he, *and change*

your

your garments ; and let us arise and go up to Be-
thel, and I will make an Alter unto God, &c.
And so at Mount Sinai, God gave order to
Moses, that the people should be sanctified and
purified when they should come to draw near
to God, and God should draw near to them,
Exod. 19. 10, 11. And so now, when we are
to draw near to God in the hearing of his
Word, we are to be careful to remove all
impediments that may hinder our profiting by
our hearing ; and this is the work of Faith,
Faith doth set a Soul a work to endeavour to
remove all impediments. Now there are di-
vers impediments to be removed, which will
certainly hinder our profiting by the Word, I
shall name some few special ones which the
Scripture hints to us : As,

First, This is one, Malice in the heart ; to
have the heart possessed with Malice towards
one or another, this will hinder us from pro-
fiting by the Word. The Apostle Peter there-
fore expressly calleth upon us, in *1 Pet. 2. 1,2.*
*Wherefore laying aside all malice, &c. As new
born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word,
that ye may grow thereby.* As if he should say,
if you harbor malice in your hearts when you
come to hear the Word, you will not grow
and profit by it ; if you entertain and allow
malice in your hearts towards one another,
this malice may break out in the envy of the
good, and welfare of another ; and so the A-
postle brings in that branch of *malice, envy,*
and sometimes it breaks out in reviling and

evil-speaking, and therefore says the Apostle, *Lay aside all malice, and envy, and evil-speaking, and so receive the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* As in Prayer, if I regard iniquity in my heart God will not hear my Prayer; so in this case, if we allow any sin in our hearts, any malice towards one or another, when we come to hear the Word, God will not listen to us, and we shall not profit by the Word: this may be one cause why people hear so much, and profit so little. If so be they do allow malice and envy in their hearts, and allow themselves to speak evil of others, they cannot hear the Word to grow and profit by it; no, we are to exercise love in our drawing near to God, love to God, and love to the Word, and love to the Saints, and love to one another; for if so be that we do not love them that we have seen or do see, says the Apostle, how can we be truly said to love God whom we have not seen? *1 John 4.20.* Therefore this is one thing, Let us be careful to lay aside all malice, and envy, and evil-speaking, if we do desire so to draw near to God in the hearing of the Word, as to profit by it.

Secondly, Another impediment that the Apostle hath in the same place of *Peter*, is hypocrisy and guile; this also must be laid aside, or else we shall not receive the Word, so as to grow and profit by it; if we come to the hearing of the Word, and do maintain guile and hypocrisy in our hearts, and allow of it, then

then we cannot profit or grow by the Word. The Apostle Peter doth plainly hold forth, that all guile and hypocrisy must be laid aside, and so receive the Word, as new born babes, that ye may grow thereby. Guile and hypocrisy doth hinder our profiting by the Word; for this is now a kind of stumbling-block, we draw near to God, and have a stumbling-block in our hearts; and says the Lord, in *Ezek. 14. 7.* *If any man setteth up Idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me, I, the Lord, will answer that man by my self.* Some do expound that place, the word *stumbling-block*, for the separating and withdrawing the heart from God. Now there are two kinds of hypocrisy or guile that are to be laid aside in hearing the Word, one is in respect of God, the other is towards man; the guile and hypocrisy towards God is this, namely, when as a man or woman doth seem to draw near to God in his worship, attending upon his Word, and yet notwithstanding the heart is not near God, but afar off from him, here is hypocrisy and dissimulation towards God; *This people, says God, draw near to me with their mouth and lips, but their heart is far from me,* Isa. 29. 13. And so Christ tells the Scribes and Pharisees, in *Matt. 15. 8.* when as a man doth pretend to draw near to God, as if he would know the Mind of God, that he may do the Will of God, and have no such intendment in his

heart, he comes to hear the Word, what doth this hold forth, but that he intends to do the word which he hears? Now, when the heart is not set to do the Will of God, here is hypocrisy. I remember *Jeremiab* speaks to that purpose, in *Jer. 52. 20.* *For ye dissembled in your hearts,* says he, *when ye sent me unto the Lord your God, saying, pray for us unto the Lord our God, and according to all that the Lord our God shall say to us, we will do it.* Your heart was not right, says he, ye pretended, and said, *whatever the Lord our God shall say, we will do,* but ye did dissemble. This is one kind of hypocrisy and guile, when a Soul doth dissemble with God, and seem to worship God, and yet the heart is far from God; pretend to come to know the Mind of God, and yet have not a full purpose and resolution of heart to do what God shall reveal and make known to be his Will. And then there is another kind of hypocrisy and guile, which is towards men; when as a man doth pretend love to his Neighbour, and kindness and friendship in Word and Lip, and yet there is no reality at all in the heart. The Apostle *John* speaks of this very thing, says he, *1 Job. 3. 8. My little Children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.* It is not a love in deed and in truth, when as our Brother or Neighbour stand in need of supply and help, and we shut up our bowels towards him; here is dissembling, we pretend love, and there is no reality. Now, says the Apostle, if you will

will hear the Word so as to profit by it, you must lay aside all guile and hypocrisy; this may be another great cause and reason why people do come and hear much, and profit little, because they harbour guile and hypocrisy in their hearts; therefore this you must be careful also to lay aside.

Thirdly, Another impediment which the Holy-Ghost also points at in Scripture, which doth hinder us from profiting by the Word, is this, when we come to hear with our hearts royled with passion, and anger, and wrath; when we come to hear, and have our spirits in a storm as it were with passion, then we may hear and hear, but shall not profit by our hearing; for now the heart and spirit is like a joyn't or bone out of the Socket, now it hath no ability to act its part, to do what lay upon such a Member to do. So 'tis in this case, when the heart and spirit is in a royle, it is put out of joyn't and frame by passion; and being disturbed, now 'tis unfit to attend upon God, to hear what God shall speak. Now a mans passion may be disturbed one of these two ways, so as to be put out of frame to attend upon God, to hear the Voice of God in his Word.

1. Sometimes by some pinching Providence of God, some afflictiong Hand of God upon him, which doth pinch and disturb the spirit, and put it into a royle; now a man or woman being thus disturbed in his spirit, is unfit to hear what God speaks, though he speak to

him in a way of mercy and grace; you have an instance for this, in *Exod. 6. 9. And Moses spake so unto the Children of Israel, but they hearkned not unto Moses.* How did he speak to the Children of *Israel*? See *vers. 6. 7, 8. Wherefore say unto the Children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burden of the Egyptians, and will rid you out of their bondage, and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which brought you out from under the burden of the Egyptians, and I will bring you in unto the land which I did sware to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, and I will give it you for an heritage; I am the Lord.* And Moses spake so unto the Children of *Israel*: but they hearkned not unto Moses, for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage. Through the Providence of God it came to pass, that they were oppressed under *Egyptian* power; and when Moses came to speak of enlargement and deliverance, they were oppressed, and their spirits were filled with anguish and trouble; and now let the Lord speak in never such a gracious manner by his Prophet, they could not attend to him for anguish of spirit.

2. And so sometimes the spirit may be put into a royle and passion for some small petty cross, some kind of vexation which others do occasion, when they cross them and vex them, and thereby their spirits are put out of order; and now they are unfit to attend upon God: You

You have an instance for this, in 1 Sam. 1. 6, 7. concerning *Hannah*, it is said there, that *her adversary provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the Lord had shut up her womb*; and she went up to the House of the Lord, and she wept and did not eat, she could not tell how to keep the Feast, to wait upon God in his Ordinances; Why? because her spirit was vexed and did fret. So you may observe it, if your spirits be put out of order, as sometimes they are upon a small occasion, observe it, the Devil is wont to take such opportunities, when you are about to draw near to God in any Ordinance, then to minister some occasion or other to put you into a fret; possibly a little thing out of the way will do it, sometimes the misplacing of a Pin will disturb the spirit, and sometimes the Husband may take some offence against the Wife, and the Wife against the Husband, or against the Servants or Children, and the Spirit is royled, and now you come to hear, you shall not profit, because now your spirits are royled with passion; and this is another impediment, and here may be also one great reason why people come and hear, and hear, and profit little, because many times their spirits are royled with passion, and this also must be removed.

Fourthly, Another Impediment that must be removed, if you will hear the Word to profit, then take heed that your hearts do not go after covetousnes, be not inordinately set upon the riches of this world, bent and resolved to be

be rich in the world, truly this will be an impediment, and will hinder you from waiting upon God in his Word; this will be like Thorns to choke the Word; for now the Word is that which doth cross and thwart us in our reaches after the riches of the world. The Word tells us of other riches that are more true Riches; now, when a mans heart is set upon the riches of the world, he cannot then yield to what is spoken; just like the rich man we read of in *Matt. 19*. The rich man comes to Christ to know what good thing he shall do to inherit eternal life; *Go*, says Christ, in *ver. 21.* *22. sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven*: And it is said, he went away sorrowful, because this was contrary to his grain; his mind and heart was set upon riches, and he could not yield to this Word of Christ. And our hearts are ready to scorn, and slight, and despise what is spoken, if our hearts be set upon the riches of the world; as you may read in *Luke 16. 14.* 'tis said there, when Christ was warning them to take heed of the world, *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon*. The Pharisees who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him, this was against the grain, their hearts were covetous, and set upon the riches of the world; and now whatever Christ speaks, they despise and set at nought. This is that which the Holy-Ghost doth warn us against, and doth shew us that this is the great ground and cause why people hear the Word and profit not,

not, because their hearts go after their covetousness. *Ezek. 33. 31, 32.* says the Lord there, *This people cometh unto thee as the people cometh, and sit before thee as my people, and they bear my words, and they seem to be pleasing to them, and they take delight in them, and thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that bath a pleasant voice, and they bear thy words, and do them not; why so? for with their mouth they shew much love, but their hearts goeth after their covetousness.* Their hearts goeth after the world, and therefore whatever is spoken will do them no good; and therefore Christ doth admonish us and advise us to take heed and beware of covetousness, *Luke 12. 15.* Well, this is another impediment; if we do desire to hear the Word to profit and edification, let us get our hearts off from the riches of the world.

Fifthly, To name no more, Take heed also of having the heart filled with the cares and matters of this world; if our hearts be filled with the world, there will be no room for the Word to take place: Just as if a Room be filled and taken up, there is no room for others to come in. If the world, and business, and occasions of the world come and take up the head and the heart, here will be no room for the Word to take place; it is just as it is in a great croud, where there is a great noise; if there be a great noise in the Street, if one come and speak a word in your ear, you cannot hear him because of the noise; so if our hearts and ears be filled with the cares and the busi-

business of the world, it makes such a noise as we cannot hear; and therefore Christ tells us, that these cares of the world are like Thorns, in *Matt. 13. 22.* *He that receiveth seed among thorns, is he that beareth the word, and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches choak the Word, and he becometh unfruitful.* Though we hear much, and there be much Seed sown, yet if it spring up among Thorns, it will never come to any maturity; and therefore hence it is, that Christ by two Parables doth shew us how the occasions and businesses of the world doth hinder people from listening to the voice of Christ in his Word, in *Luke 14.* There is one Parable of a great Supper that a great man made, and invited many, but they refused to come, and made light of it. And the other Parable you have in *Matt. 22. 5.* concerning a King which made a Marriage Feast for his Son, and invited his Guests, and when the Feast was prepared they made light of it, and would not come; What was the Reason? One must go to his Farm, and another to his Merchandise; one about this business, and another about that, and they could not attend to the Lords Voice in his Word. Christ doth thereby shew us, that the matters and cares of this world, when they fill the head and the heart, they do hinder us from attending upon God in his Word: This is now another impediment which is to be removed, if we would so attend upon the Word, as to hear it with profit. And truly

truly Brethren, to speak plainly, I am afraid that this is one great cause why many do profit so little by hearing the Word ; they come reeking out of the world, and their hands, and heads, and hearts are full of the world, and by that means the Word comes to be unprofitable to them. Oh ! that we could therefore learn to understand the Lords Will, to understand what are the impediments that hinder us from hearing the Word with profit, and be careful to get them removed : This is the second Direction, how to hear the Word in a way of Faith. Faith doth put us upon the removing those impediments that do hinder us from profiting by the Word.

Thirdly, The Third Direction is this; If we would hear the Word in a way of Faith, so as we may profit by it, it is to hear it as the very Word of God, as if God should speak from Heaven to us immediately ; How would we hear the Word if God should speak to us immediately from Heaven ? with what reverence and attention would you hear ? how would you be careful to swallow up every Word that God should speak ? Brethren, know this, that God out of tenderness and respect to us, speaks in another manner and way to us now, instrumentally by man, more mediately, because we are not able to bear the immediate Voice of God ; as they said at Mount Sinai, *Let not God speak any more to us, for we cannot bear it.* Now, the Lord, out of indulgency to us, because we cannot bear his own immediate

mediate voice, the Lord is pleased to speak to us by means and instruments, by men that are like our selves; now, I say, it is God that speaks to us by men, it is God that speaks from Heaven to us by men; therefore we are to hear the Word, as if God from Heaven did speak to us, as the Apostle speaks, in *Heb. 12. 25.* *Take heed that ye refuse not him that speaks from Heaven.* This is the way now to profit by the Word, and to hear it in Faith; you shall find that *Cornelius* he heard in this manner, when *Peter* came to Preach to him, *Cornelius* attended to him, as if God himself spoke to him, in *Acts 10. 33.* *Now, therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God;* as if we should hear God himself speak. And you see what the advantage and benefit of it was; it is said in *vers. 44.* that *while Peter yet spake these words, the Holy-Ghost fell on all them that heard him.* By this means the Word was made profitable and effectual to them, *the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard it;* as if God himself had spoken to them. And the like you read concerning the *Theffalonians*, in *1 Theff. 2. 13.* says the Apostle, *For this cause thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.* Ye received it not as the word of man, though it was spoken by man; but ye heard it as the very Word of God, as if

if God himself spake from Heaven to you ; and therefore Brethren, mind this, when we come to hear the Word, we should attend upon it, and hear it as the very Word of God, as if God himself did speak from Heaven, and so receive it.

Object. But you will say, *What, shall we receive every thing that is Preached by Ministers, as the very Word of God?* Indeed if they were infallible, we might ; but men are not infallible in their Preaching, as the Apostles were ; they are but men, and they may err and mistake sometimes ; now, are we bound to receive every thing from them as if God himself did speak it ? Ministers also (you will say) may differ sometimes in their teaching, one man is of one opinion, and another man of another opinion, what, are we to receive whatever one and another speak, as the very Word of God ? as if God spoke to us ? how can this be ?

Answe. For Answer to this, briefly :

1. I say, therefore it doth concern Ministers of the Gospel to take very great heed, that whatever they speak, it be according to the Mind and Will of God, to speak nothing of their own heads, but what they have warrant for from the Word ; and therefore we should usually back what we hold forth to the people, for matter of Doctrine to be believed, or for matter to be practised from the Word of God ; we should be very careful of that, so that we may be able to say, as the Apostle did, 1 Cor. 15. 2, 3. *For I delivered unto you first*

first of all, that which I also received, &c. and so shou'd we do. And let me tell you, I confess it hath been matter of some trouble to me, fearing lest I should sometimes speak what I have not warrant for from the Lord's mouth, to hold forth according to his Will; It hath made me sometimes (to tell you plainly) to wish that I were otherwise employed, and that the Lord might employ those that might more fully declare, and hold forth his Mind and Counsel to the people, than possibly I may be able to do; but this is that that lyes incumbent upon Ministers, to be very careful to hold forth nothing but what they have warrant for from the Word of God. But,

2. Suppose what is held forth and delivered sometimes by Ministers be not expressly backed by the Word, yet notwithstanding we should be very backward and slow to reject and despise what is held forth, though we do not see at present what warrant there is for it in the Word; possibly it may be according to the Mind of Christ in a consequential way, it may be reduced from the Word. And thus far further we should do, we should be searching and inquiring whether those things be so or no? like the *Bereans*, in *Acts 17.11.* It is said, that they were more noble than those in *Theffalonica*, for they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched into the Scriptures dayly, to see whether those things were so or no. The *Bereans*, when they heard *Paul* Preach something possibly that

that they did not so well apprehend to be grounded upon the Scriptures, they did not thereupon slight and despise what they heard, but here was matter of further inquiry for them, they searched the Scriptures to see whether it was according to the Scriptures or no; and they were commended for it: so should we do, if any thing be held forth that we cannot see for the present express warrant and ground for in the Scripture, we should not slight it and cast it off, but be searching into the Scriptures, to see whether there may not be some ground and warrant for it; This is the third Direction; if we would hear the Word of God in Faith, we must be careful to receive it as the very word of God.

Fourthly, If we would hear the Word in Faith, so as it may be to profit and edification, we should so hear it, as to make a particular application of it to our selves, as spoken to us in particular; mark it, I pray, here is the direction, we should not only hear the Word, and receive it as spoken by the Lord, as if God himself should speak to us, but take it as spoken to us particularly from the Lord; every one should take it to himself as particularly spoken to me, and to me in particular; as they said to *Job*, in *Job* 5. 27. *Lo this, we have searched it, so it is; bear it, and know it thou for thy good; for thy good in particular.* And as *Paul* said, in *Acts* 13. 26. *To you is the word of Salvation sent. So to you, and to every one in particu-*

lar is this word sent, and this is the very proper work of Faith, to make a particular application of the Word that is spoken to its self. This, I say, is the proper work of Faith ; for you know in Scripture, the word of Command and the word of Promise lay in general, now it is the very work and act of Faith, to take the word that lies in common and general, and apply it particularly to the Heart ; this is the very proper work of Faith ; or else Brethren, the word will do us no good ; It will be just like a Table full of Meat ; the Meat will do us no good if it be not taken ; so long as it stands upon the Table it will do us no good, if it be not taken and eaten down, and applied particularly to us. So in this Case, so long as the Word lies only in the Scripture before us, the word of Command, or the word of Promise, or whatever word it be, if it lie before us as common and in general, and there be no particular application of it, it doth us no good at all, we shall not profit by it ; but now when it comes particularly to be applied, that God speaks this as a word of Command to me, that this is my Duty, and I must take it as if God did speak it particularly to me, that which I am called to perform ; so if it be a word of Promise, I should take it as spoken from the Lord to me, the Lord calls me to accept of it and embrace it ; and, Brethren, though the Word of the Lord seems to lay in common, yet it hath an eye upon every person that hears it, it looks to every

ry one, just as a Picture, if it be exactly drawn, if there be a Hundred Persons in the Room, the eye will be upon every one in the Room ; so the eye of the Word is upon every particular person, that hears it ; and know it for your good, that the Lord doth speak to every one of us in particular, when the Word is Preached, and we shd not say, Well, here was a word fit for such a one, applying it to others, and such a one was met with in the Word: No, no, Brethren, so long as we can apply the Word to others and not to our selves, it will do us no good ; but this is our work and busines, when the Word is Preached in the Name of the Lord, and according to the Will of God, we must take it as spoken to our selves ; and here is now the act of Faith, to make that particular which is spoken in general. This is now a Fourth direction.

I shall name but one more, and so conclude.

Fifthly, If we would hear the Word of God in Faith, so as to profit by it, then we should act Faith variously, according to the several kinds or parts of the Word, for you know there are divers parts in the Word ; as now, there is a Word of Doctrine, and a Word of Promise; some are Commands, and some are Threatnings; now, I say, we should act Faith upon the Word variously, according to the several parts of it ; as now for example, if so be that we meet with a word of Doctrine, as concerning the Creation of the World that

was made out of nothing, or the Resurrection of the Dead, that every person shall be raised again; or concerning the Trinity of persons in the Godhead, or the union of two natures in one person, or our being justified by Faith in the Righteousness of Christ, &c. These things are Doctrinal; now, Faith is to be acted here, Namely, by giving our assent to the truth thereof, by believing of it as faithful and true. *He that receiveth his Testimony, hath set to his seal that God is True, John 3. 33.* And by Faith we believe that the World was created out of nothing; this is acting of Faith upon this part of the Word, by giving our assent to it, and believing of it to be true, because the Lord hath spoken it; possibly we cannot understand it, how there should be three persons in one essence, and that the same Body shall be raised again that is mouldered into Dust; we cannot understand the reason of it; but because God hath spoken it, we should believe it. But then there is another part of the Word that contain Promises; now, how should Faith act upon the Promises, namely, by leaning and resting with expectation upon the Lord for the performance of them, being persuaded that God can do it, and that God will perform what he hath spoken; just like *Abraham, Rom. 4. 20, 21.* God had made him a promise to give him a Son in his old Age, Flesh and Blood would have disputed against this promise; but saies the Apostle, *He was strong in Faith, giving Glory unto God;* he believed

lieved that God would perform what he had spoken; it was against Flesh and Blood, *Sarab* was Old, and he was a Hundred years old or there-about; he might have said how can these things be? and refused to believe it; no, but he gave Glory to God by believing; Thus we are to act Faith upon that part of the Word. Another part of the Word is Commands; The word of Command; how is Faith to act there? Namely, in a way of Obedience; we should yeild Obedience to what God Commands, though it may be very hard to us. Just as *Abraham* did, God commanded him to go out of his own Country, and to go into a Land he knew not whither; *Abraham*, by Faith, obeyed and went out, not knowing whither he went; and so God commanded him to offer up his Son *Isaac*; *Abraham* acted Faith in a way of Obedience to the Command. And then another part of the Word is Threatning; and how is Faith to act upon the Threatnings? Namely, thus, in a way of fear, to endeavour to avoid those Judgements that are threatened; in *Hebrews* 11. 7: *By Faith, Noab being warned of God of things not seen as yet, more ed with fear prepared an Ark to the saving of his House, &c.* Truly, thus I say, Faith is to be set a work, and to act variously according to the several parts of the Word of God. There are several parts of the Word of God; now, the whole word of God is the Object of Faith; but yet notwithstanding, Faith doth act variously, according to the variety of the parts of

the Word. Now, it is the wisdom of Christians to exercise Faith suitably according to that part of the Word that Faith is exercised about. And thus, Brethren, I have briefly given you four or five Directions how we are to exercise Faith in hearing of the Word, that so we may not hear without profit, that so we may please God in our hearing ; for *without Faith it is impossible to please God.* Brethren and Beloved, I must not enlarge; but in a word, It hath been the complaint of most Christians, and possibly some here present, their want of profiting by the Word ; Oh ! I hear, and hear, but the Lord knows I do not profit; this is the matter of your complaint; well, now you may go home, and lay your hand upon the Sore, the Lord hath discovered to me this day the great Cause why I have profited no more under the Word that I have heard so often; I see now it is for want of the exercise of Faith, I have heard my duty, but the Lord knows I have exercised Faith but little; and therefore, I say, here is matter of humiliation for us, before the Lord, we should lye low in the presence of the Lord for our so little acting of Faith, in our hearing the Word of God. And, Oh ! therefore for the future, as we do desire that the Lord may be pleased with our hearing, so let us be careful to exercise Faith in our hearing; you have heard the Directions, I shall not need to repeat them, but go home and consider them, and be careful to put them in practice, that you may be acting and exercising

exercising Faith in hearing the Word, for without Faith it will be impossible for you to please God. Though you should hear Sermons never so often, if you neglect to act and exercise Faith, you will not profit by them, nor please God in your hearing. And so now I have done with this particular, namely, how we are to exercise Faith in hearing the Word; it remains that we should speak about exercising Faith in our partaking of the Lords Table.

But thus much shall suffice for the present.

P 4 SERMON

SERMON IX.

Hebrews XI. 6.

But without Faith it is impossible to please him.

THE words of the Text is a Proposition : I have spent some time in the handling of it; we came by way of inference to this, That if it be impossible to please God without Faith, then it doth concern us every one, in all the duties and services that we perform, to be acting and exercising of Faith; not only without the Grace of Faith, but without the exercise of Faith we cannot please God ; and therefore to this end, we came to lay down some Directions, how we may come to exercise Faith in those Duties that we perform, that so we may please God ; we gave you some Directions the last time about the exercise of Faith in hearing of the Word; I come now to lay down some Directions about our partaking of the Lords-Supper in Faith. That Faith is requisite and necessary to our partaking

taking of the Lords-Table, that I think is out of doubt and question, not only the habit of Faith that a man or woman be a believer, but also the very acting and exercise of Faith is requisite for our profitable partaking of this Ordinance: The Grace of Faith is necessary for the giving of us a right to partake of this Ordinance; for a Man must have life, or else meat will do him no good; set the daintiest meat before him that is dead, he will be never a whit the better for it, the meat cannot nourish him; so if we have not a principle of spiritual life which is infused into the heart by Faith in Christ, if we have not spiritual life, spiritual food will do us no good; therefore there must be the Grace of Faith.

Again, This Ordinance of the Lords Supper, it is a sealing Ordinance, to seal, and confirm, and ratify the Covenant of Grace, and the benefits of the Covenant; now if so be we be not in the Covenant, then this Ordinance cannot seal to us the blessings and benefits of the Covenant; no, we do but set a seal to a blank, and that signifies nothing; therefore, I say, it is necessary there should be the Grace of Faith, the habit of Faith, that those that do partake of this Ordinance should be Believers. But this is that which I am to speak to, that though only such as are Believers are to partake of this Ordinance, yet it is not sufficient for us that we are Believers; but if we would partake of this Ordinance so as to please God, we must act and exercise

Faith

Faith also about it. For, I pray, consider,

1. It is possible for those that are Believers to partake unworthily, to eat and drink unworthily, says the Apostle, in *1 Cor. 11. 29. He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself.* Who doth he speak to there? He writes to Believers: Believers then may eat and drink unworthily. How comes a Soul then to eat and drink worthily? to partake worthily of this Ordinance? Truly, by the acting and exercising of Faith; for though he have the habit of Faith, he may partake unworthily. What is the reason that divers Believers come to partake of this Ordinance, some partake worthily, and some unworthily? The reason is, because some partake in the exercise of Faith, and they partake worthily; and some partake without the exercise of Faith, and they partake unworthily. And mark how the Apostle goes on, says he, it is requisite that those that partake at the Lords Table, that they should examine themselves; *Let a man examine himself, vers. 28. and so let him eat.* Examine himself concerning what? why, among other things, about his Faith. What, whether he be a Believer or no? Yes, that is one thing he must examine, whether he do truly believe or no; whether he have the grace of Faith or no; but that is not all; suppose that be out of doubt and question, that he is a Believer, yet he must examine himself still about the acting and exercising of Faith in this

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Ordinance, and therefore this Duty of Examination of a mans self doth imply that there must be an actuating and exercising of Faith in the partaking of this Ordinance. Further, says the Apostle, they that come to this Ordinance must discern the Lords Body, *vers. 29.*
He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lords body. (I may speak something by and by concerning that, to help you to understand that) but for our present purpose, discerning the Lords body, How shall a man or woman discern the Lords Body? We do not discern the Lords Body by our bodily eye, by looking on the Bread and Wine, the outward Elements, but it must be by the acting of a spiritual eye; and what is that but the eye of Faith? Faith then must be acted and exercised in this Ordinance, or else we do not discern the Lords Body; and if we do not discern the Lords Body, then we eat and drink unworthily, and so do not please God; therefore there is required the exercise of Faith in the partaking of this Ordinance. I might add further still, that the Blessings and Benefits that are held forth, and conveyed by this Ordinance, are all spiritual Blessings, and therefore they must be partaken of by the exercise of our spiritual fences: It is not for a man or woman to come and take the Bread and Wine, and favour it by the exercise of his bodily sense of tasting, no, but there must be the spiritual fences exercised,

so as to partake of the spiritual blessings that are held forth and conveyed by it. Well then, it is granted now, that it is requisite that there must be not only the grace of Faith, or the habit of Faith, but there must be the actual exercising of Faith in the partaking of this Ordinance, or else we cannot please God.

Quest. Well then, the great Question is, how a Man or Woman should so exercise Faith in the partaking of the Lords Table, that so he may please God in his partaking of it.

Answ. There are four or five Directions that I shall briefly lay down to help you in the partaking of this great Ordinance in Faith ; and oh ! that we might be serious in attending to them, that we may hear for the time to come.

First, The first Direction is this ; If we would exercise Faith in our partaking of this Ordinance, then we must look upon this Ordinance as a great Ordinance and Institution of Jesus Christ, that he hath appointed as the means of our Communion and fellowship with him : I pray mind it, I say, Faith doth help the Soul to look at this Ordinance as a great Institution of Jesus Christ, that he hath appointed for the means of our Communion with him. Two things here we are to take notice of ;

1. First of all, that we are to look at it as the great Ordinance and Institution of Christ. People for the most part, especially those that do not act Faith, they look at the outward

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elements, and they come and partake of the Bread and Wine, but they do not look at it as such an Ordinance of Jesus Christ; now, Faith doth help a Soul to look at it as the great Institution of Jesus Christ, one of the greatest Ordinances that ever Jesus Christ did institute and appoint; it was one of the last things that Christ did when he was to leave the World, when the time of his suffering did approach and draw near; the same Night in which he was betrayed, he did institute this Ordinance. Certainly it is an Ordinance of very great concernment, that Jesus Christ should institute it, and appoint it when he had such weighty matters laid upon his Hand, when he was to take his farewell of the World; yet then, a little before he was betrayed, he did institute and appoint this Ordinance. If People did but rightly consider this, that this is a great Ordinance and Institution of Jesus Christ, it would make them serious about it, and look at it as a very weighty thing, as a matter of very great Concernment, and so to be very careful about Preparation for it; but now, when People look at it as a small, light, and ordinary thing, the taking of a little Bread and Wine, &c. These things are of ordinary use amongst us, and so they come in an ordinary manner to it, not acting and exercising Faith about it; but now, when a Soul comes to look at it (as Faith doth help a Soul to look at it) as a very great Ordinance of Jesus Christ, which he hath appointed, and thereupon the Soul comes to be serious about

the participation of it, now, I say, Faith doth not only enable the Soul to look at it as an Ordinance and Institution of Jesus Christ, but withal it doth enable the Soul to look at it as an Ordinance appointed for Communion with Jesus Christ, and Fellowship with him ; as you know the Apostle speaks, *1 Cor. 10. 16.* *The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ ? and the Cup of blessing which we bless, Is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ ?* Christ hath appointed it for this very end, that we should have Communion and Fellowship with him in his Death, in his Merits, in his Righteousness, in what he hath obtained ; it is appointed for that very end and purpose, and therefore when people do not consider wherefore Christ hath appointed it, it is made the lesser account of, and people are the more careless in their approaching to it; they come and eat a piece of Bread, and drink a Cup of Wine, &c. But they do not look at it as a solemn Ordinance appointed by Jesus Christ for that end and purpose ; therefore, I say, remember this, if you would partake in Faith, it should be our care to look at it as the great Institution and Ordinance of Jesus Christ, and appointed for that end and purpose, that we might have Communion and Fellowship with Jesus Christ in it : This is the first Direction.

Secondly, If you would partake of this Ordinance in Faith, then be careful to look to the right administration of it. Faith doth cause

us to look to the administration of it, that it be according to Christs Institution and appointment; for otherwise we do not partake of it as an Ordinance and Institution of Jesus Christ, if it be not administred according to the appointment of Christ, and that we must be perswaded of if we would act in Faith; we may look at it as a great Ordinance and Institution of Jesus Christ, yet notwithstanding, if so be we are not perswaded of that, that the administration of it is according to the Will of Christ, to the institution and appointment of Christ, truly then we cannot exercise Faith in it; and therefore there are these two things to be attended to to this end; if we would act in Faith about the administration of it, that it is administred according to the Institution of Christ. Namely,

First, That the person administring it is appointed and called by Christ to do it: For, now, if so be that another should come that Christ hath never called to it, to administer it, Christ will not own it for his own Ordinance and Institution, we cannot then look for the presence of Christ, nor for the Blessing of Christ. As, now, for example, if there should come one in the Kings name, that pretends to be sent and authorised by the King, yet if he be not sent, if he come and Execute such an Office, if he be not authorised by the King, all his actings and executions are invaluable, and signify nothing. So in this case, if any come in the Name of Christ, to administer the

the Institution of Christ, if Christ have not authorised him, and given him commission to do it, this is no Ordinance that Christ will own; because it is not administered by such a person whom he hath sent and appointed, the administration therefore is invaluable and of no effect; therefore, I say, it doth concern us to look to that, to be perswaded of that, that those that do administer this Ordinance to us, are such as are authorised by Christ to the Work.

Quest. But you will say, *How shall I know that, that I may be perswaded of that?* (I know that this hath been little minded in former times, and God might please to wink at the former times of Ignorance; but now in these times of light he doth require that we should be more exact about his Institutions and appointments.) *How shall we know then*, you will say, *that we may be perswaded that such as do administer this Ordinance, are appointed by Jesus Christ?*

Answ. For Answer, Something you may remember was spoken the last time about hearing, that we should hear those that were sent by Christ, if we would hear in Faith: But briefly for our present purpose, Consider, I pray, and understand how Christ doth call and ordain one to administer these Institutions of his, briefly and plainly thus, When a person is called by a Church of Christ, according to the Will of Christ, by the directions that Christ hath laid down in his Word, according

according to the Rules of the Gospel, and set apart accordingly for that worke and busines, to teach and administer the Holy things of Christ; when a person is thus called to Office in the Church, by a Church of Christ, acting regularly according to the Rules that Christ hath laid down in his Word, now such a one is called and authorised by Christ. And therefore, I say, consider, that if we would be persuaded about the right administration of this Ordinance, we must be satisfied in our spirits, that such as are the administrators of it are called and appointed by Jesus Christ, to do it in his name, otherwise Christ will not own it; and therefore, truly, it is a matter of wonderment that women should be allowed to administer any Ordinance; as how Baptisme, in case of absolute necessity (as they call it) a Midwife may take Water and Baptise a Child, this is a person that Christ did never institute to administer that Ordinance, and Christ will never own that as an Ordinance of his so administered: So on the other side, amongst others that profess higher, namely, to take and set apart one for this time to administer the Ordinance, and another for another time, to call out one Brother for to administer the Ordinance one time, and another another time, is this according to the institution of Christ? Doth Christ call out one to be an Officer at one time, and another at another time, and not to have a standing Officer in the Church? Therefore, I say, let us be careful to keep o

the Institution of Christ, to observe Christs Institution, and to be well perswaded that the Ordinance is administred according to the Institution and Will of Christ, otherwise we cannot act in Faith in the partaking of this Ordinance: That is one thing about the right administration of it; to look that the person that doth administer it in Christs Name, be called and authorised by Christ himself, unto the work.

2. But then another thing that is requisite for the right administration of this Ordinance, is this, namely, for the manner of it, that the manner of the Administration of the Ordinance be according to the Mind and Will of Christ in the Gospel; suppose now there be a person that Christ hath called and authorised to the work, yet if the Ordinance for the manner of it be not administred according to Christs Institution and Direction, truly Christ will not own this for an Ordinance of his, because it is not administred according to Christs appointment. And it doth concern Christians, though in former times Christians have little minded these things about the manner of administration, whether it have been according to the Institution of Christ or no; the Lord may have passed by infirmities of that kind, and winked at infirmities and miscarriages therein; but now the Lord hath revealed more light, and therefore now it concerns Christians to understand and know the manner of Christ's institution and appointment,

how he will have his Ordinances administered; if so be this Ordinance be not administered according to the Mind of Christ, for the manner of it, truly, Brethren, it may be so far from profiting of us, that we may be the worse for it. As now, about other things commonly amongst us, if things be not acted legally according to the tenour and manner of the Law, a Man may do that whereby he may damnify himself, though it may be (possibly) to recover and take what is his own in some cases; as you that have skill in the Law know, that in some cases a Man taking his own where he finds it, if he doth not take it in a legal way, he may hazard and damnify himself. So we think the Ordinances of Christ are ours, and we partake of them as our own; now, if we take our own not according to the Mind of Christ, instead of profiting by the Ordinance, we may be the worse for it; Christ may not own it for his own Institution. Brethren, know this, that the Lord is very exact about the manner of the administration of this Ordinance; you know what it cost King *Saul*, *Saul* would needs take upon him to offer sacrifice, *1 Sam. 13*. It did belong only to the Priest to offer Sacrifice, it was in a strait, when the *Philistines* were ready to set upon him, and he calls for sacrifice at *verse 9*. he would offer a burnt offering; but mark what the consequence was, when *Samuel* came and understood what *Saul* had done, says *Samuel*, at *vers. 13*. *Thou hast done*

foolishly, thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord, for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever; but now thy kingdom shall not continue, &c. And so we read concerning *Uzziah*, 2 Chron. 26. *Uzziah* would needs take upon him to burn Incense in the Temple, the burning of Incense did before to the Priest; but immediately in the very place, the Lord struck him with a Leprosie, ver. 19. the leprosie appeared in his forehead, whereupon the Priests did drive him out, and he himself also hasted to go out, because the Lord had smitten him, ver. 20. I tell you, the Lord is very exact about the administration of his Ordinances, and would have his people to be exact about it; you know what *David* himself said when the Lord had smitten *Uzza* for laying his hand upon the Ark when they were removing it, and carrying it towards *Jerusalem*; it was carried upon a Cart, when it should have been carried upon the Priests shoulders; and when the Cart shook the Ark, and *Uzza* out of a desire to preserve the Ark from breaking, laid his hand upon it to keep it, God struck him immediately dead in the place; and what was the reason? says *David* afterward, in 1 Chron. 15. 13. for because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order according to his Institution; therefore it is a matter of great concernment, if people will act in Faith in the participation of

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the Ordinances of Christ, to look to the right manner of administration of them ; Let us be perswaded of that, that they are administred according to the Institution and appointment of Jesus Christ, both in respect of the person administirung, and in respect of the manner of its administration ; This is the Second Direction.

Thirdly, If a Man or Woman will exercise Faith in this great Ordinance of the Lords-Supper, he must then be careful to have some grounds to perswade him, or to give him hope that the Ordinance doth belong to him, or that he hath a right to it ; he must act in Faith so far, that he must be perswaded, or have some comfortable grounds to hope that he hath a right to this Ordinance, or else he cannot act in Faith. See what the Apostle saith concerning eating of ordinary meat, in *Rom. 14.* and last verse, *He that eateth, and doubteth whether it be lawful or no, he is damned if he eat;* though it be but his ordinary meat, he that doubteth is damned if he eat. Much more in this case, he that comes to eat at the Lords-Table, and doth eat, not having any ground to hope it belongs to him, or that he hath any right to it, this is now a greater sin, and he cannot act in Faith : For Brethren, it is not for all to partake of the Lords-Table, I suppose that is out of doubt, it is not for all, one as well as another ; no, there is a difference to be put ; as now, those that are prophane they have no right to it, they will eat and Drink unworthily ; we may find this amongst the very

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Heathens, they observed rules in their Sacred and Solemn Rites and Ceremonies, it was observed amongst them, that prophane persons must not come near them ; prophane persons were to withdraw as unworthy ones : So much more must such withdraw from this Ordinance, they have no right to it. And again, such as are Ignorant have no right to it ; those that cannot discern the Lords Body in their partaking of it, they have no right to it ; those that are not able to examine themselves before they eat and drink, they have no right to it ; then all persons have not a right to this Ordinance. Nay, I will say further, that those that are unbelievers, though they may be civil otherwise, yet those that are not believers they have no right to this Ordinance. I remember the Apostle hath such an expression, *Heb. 13. 10.* Saies he, *We have an Altar whereof they have no right to eat that serve Tabernacles.* That is, those that were unbelievers, the *Jews* that did not believe that Christ was come in the Flesh, they were unbelievers, and so had no right to eat. So that, I say, it is not for every one to come and partake of the Lords-Table: then we must have some grounds to hope and perswade our selves that we have some right to it, or else we cannot partake in Faith.

Object. But you will say, *This may be a ground of discouragement to many a gracious heart. Many a gracious Soul is exercised with scruples of Conscience, and may Question whether they have a right*

right or no ; and such by this Direction must be forced to withdraw from it.

Ans/w. For Answer briefly, we are to know that every doubt, and scruple, and Question that Christians may have about their coming to this Ordinance, is not sufficient for them to withdraw from it, or to withhold their presence in it ; no, they are not presently therefore to withdraw and withhold from the participation of it.

What shall they do then ? You will say.

Ans/w. Briefly, I pray mind it, because it may concern some that are scrupulous, and to be exercised with Questions and doubts, whether they have right to it or no; therefore such are seriously to consider, what the ground of their doubt and scruple is, whether it be sufficient and warrantable to cause a withdrawal from this Ordinance; amongst others, the grounds of scruple in this case may be reduced to three heads.

First, Possibly some do Question and scruple their coming to this Ordinance, for fear they should eat and drink unworthily, and so eat and drink their own damnation ; that is my fear, saies one, and therefore I dare not come, I fear I may not come. I pray now, therefore, consider this briefly, for I may not enlarge ; but consider this, whether a mans Questioning whether he shall eat and drink unworthily, be a sufficient ground and warrant for him to withhold from the Lords-Table ? I pray mind and consider what the Apostle

saies, *1 Cor. 11. 27, 28.* Wherefore, who soever shall eat this bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat. Mark, doth the Apostle say, that he that fears that he shall eat and drink unworthily shall therefore withhold? no, but let him be the more solicitous and careful to examine himself, and prepare himself, that he may not partake unworthily of it; that the Apostle doth intimate. The Apostle doth not give a liberty upon it to withhold; Therefore, I say, that is not a sufficient ground, because we fear we shall partake unworthily; but therefore we should be the more solicitous and careful to examine our selves, and to be preparing our selves the more to partake of this Ordinance.

Secondly, Ordinarily some do fear and doubt whether they may partake of this Ordinance or no, by reason they find themselves so weak in Grace; Oh! saies one, my Faith is so weak, and my other graces so weak, that I fear I shall but sin if I should come to the Lords-Table. Now, I pray, Consider whether this be a sufficient scruple or no; for I pray mark, Consider the end of this Ordinance, and for whom it is appointed; what, is it appointed for those that are perfect in grace? for those that are perfect in Faith and other graces? Is it not appointed rather to be a means to perfect and strengthen our graces? therefore the weaker we apprehend our graces to be, the

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more need we have to draw near to Christ in this Ordinance, for the further Communication of the Spirit and grace to us, that we may be strengthened in our inward man, and have our grace increased ; That is the second scruple.

Thirdly, The third scruple may be this, which commonly is the greatest of all ; but suppose that I have no grace at all, as I question whether I have any grace in truth or no ; upon examination of my self, I cannot find that I have any Faith ; is it for me to come to this Ordinance ? Mark, I pray, (in a word briefly) A Soul sometimes under Temptation may be ready to conclude it hath no grace at all ; but, I pray, consider thus much, though a Soul cannot say that it doth truly believe on Christ, yet if so be there be a real hungering and thirsting after Christ, a real desire after Christ, in such a case a Soul is to come and partake of this Ordinance ; *Elected are they that Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled.* Therefore though you cannot say certainly that you have Faith really wrought in you, yet notwithstanding, if there be a real hunger and desire, and thirst after the enjoyment of Christ, and communion with Christ, in such a case a Soul may come to partake of this Ordinance , and such a Soul hath a right to it. This is now a third direction, how we may come in Faith to this Ordinance ; Namely, to have some grounds to perswade us to hope that we have a right to it, otherwise we cannot come in Faith.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Take a fourth Direction, which is this, Namely, if we would act and exercise Faith in this Ordinance, then we must be careful to be found diligent in those things that are required towards our preparation to it. I pray mind it, it is the proper nature of Faith to put a Soul upon diligence, in applying its self to the means for the obtaining of any end; it is the proper nature of Faith to put a Soul upon the diligent use of means, tending thereunto, this is the proper nature of Faith; indeed presumption, if it have any hope of any Blessing or Mercy, presumption leads a man to neglect the means, but the proper work and nature of Faith is to lead a Soul to the diligent use of the means, to obtain the Mercy or Blessing it hopes for; I could give you divers instances in Scripture for this, how Faith doth put a Soul upon the diligent use of means, that are required for such an end; I remember 'tis said in 2 Chron. 20. concerning *Je-hoshaphat*, he was invaded by a foreign enemy, and thereupon he set himself to seek the Lord, in wrestling by Prayer; well, the Lord is pleased to give him a gracious answer by the Prophet, *in the midst of the Congregation*: vers. 14, 15. And be said, *Hearken ye, Judah and ye Inhabitants of Jerusalem, thus saith the Lord, be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the Battel is not yours, but the Lords. Vers. 17. *Ye shall not need to fight in the Battel; set your selves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah**

Judah and Jerusalem ; fear not, be not dismayed ; to morrow go out against them, the Lord will be with you. Now *Jeboishaphat* having this promise, his Faith did carry him out to set himself in Battel-aray, as if they were to fight for it ; he would not neglect the means that God had appointed. So you read of *Paul*, in *Acts 27*. *Paul* was in danger by Sea, in a great Storm, in danger to be wrecked, and it is said, the Angel of the Lord came to him, *vers. 23, 24.* *For there stood by me this night the Angel of the Lord, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not Paul, thou must be brought before Cesar ; and Lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.* Wherefore, *sirs, saies Paul, be of good cheer, for I believe God, that it shall be even as be told me.* *Paul* had a promise that none that were in the Ship should be drowned, but that all should come safe to shore; now, did *Paul's* Faith make him careless in looking after the means for his preservation? no, for mark now, the Mariners and Seamen they thought their case was desperate, and they under pretence to make use of the Boat, did intend to have gotten away. Now *Paul* knew that the ordinary means for their preservation was to have the Mariners to stay to look after the Ship ; and when they under colour, as though they would have cast Anchors out of the foreship, let down the Boat into the Sea, and were about to flee out, *saies Paul to the Centurion, and to the Soldiers, vers. 31.* *Except these abide in the Ship, ye cannot be saved.* What ! had he not a promise

mise that they should be all saved? Yes, but yet saies *Paul*, if you do not use the means diligently and carefully, you cannot look to have the Mercy. Faith puts us upon diligence in the use of means, whereas presumption doth take a man off from the use of means, and make him careless and slothful about the means; but Faith doth make a man diligent in the use of the means to attain the end, which is the blessing that God hath promised. So in this case, God doth require in order to our right participation of this Ordinance, that we should prepare our selves before hand for this Ordinance; now, it is the proper work of Faith to set us to work, to be diligent in our preparation for it, in those ways and means which God hath appointed; and what are those? Briefly, amongst others, this is one Namely, self-examination; saies the Apostle, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat. &c.* Examine himself about what? Briefly, let a man examine himself if he will partake worthily, especially about three or four things.

First, What are the special ends of this Ordinance; and this indeed is to discern the Lords Body; for if so be we do not understand wherefore we come to this Ordinance, we do not discern the Lords Body, that is, we do put no great difference between the Bread and Wine in this Ordinance, and common Bread and Wine; and so we do not discern the Lords Body; therefore, I say, this is one thing in the examination of our selves, consider

der and examine what are the special ends for which Christ hath appointed this Ordinance. And amongst the rest, they are these:

1st, Christ hath appointed this great Ordinance to have us to keep in remembrance his Death ; his laying down of his life for us ; his shedding his Blood for us ; we are very apt to forget this great kindness of Christ, and therefore Christ hath appointed this Ordinance for this great end amongst others, that we may remember his death, *1 Cor. 11. 26, As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew forth the Lords death till he come.* It is a memorial of the Death of Jesus Christ.

2^{dly}, Another end of it is this, namely, that we might have Communion with Jesus Christ in his Death, and in the merits of his righteousness. It is appointed for that end, *The Bread which we break, saies the Apostle, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ? and the cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ?* Hereby now we profess that we have Communion with Christ, and it is appointed for this end ; we must understand this, or else we do not discern the Lords Body : we must examine wherefore we come to partake of this Ordinance.

3^{dly}, Another end is for the sealing up of the Covenant of grace to us, it is a Seal of the righteousness of Faith, as Baptisme and Circumcision was, and it seals up that righteousness to our Faith that is held forth through Christ.

4^{thly},

4bly, Another special end of this Ordinance, is to profess our near union with all Believers, our love to, and our union with all Believers. Saies the Apostle, We are all but one Bread, *1 Cor. 10. 17.* All moulded up into one Body; and Christians should be of one heart and one Soul, when they come to partake of this Ordinance. Now, I say, if we would come in Faith, we are to prepare for it, by examining our selves concerning the ends for which Christ hath appointed this Ordinance.

2ly, We are to examine our selves not only about the ends of this Ordinance, but also concerning our Faith, whether we do truly believe in Christ or no; or what grounds we have to hope that we do truly believe in Christ, or that we have an interest in Christ; we are to examine our selves concerning that, and also about our acting and exercising Faith on Christ: and if so be we find our Faith weak, as I said, it may be so weak as that there may be nothing sometimes but hungerings, and thirstings, and desires after Christ: therefore we should search and examine what our Faith is, the weakness of it, and thereby be the more desirous to come to this Ordinance, that our weak Faith and weak Graces might be strengthened and confirmed. And so,

3dly, Again, We are to examine our selves concerning our repentance, Namely, concerning our judging of our selves for former failings and miscarriages; we should be mourning and humbling of our selves for our turnings

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nings aside, and warping from the Rule and Law of God, and so we should desire, and endeavour, and resolve through the strength of Christ, to walk more closely with God, and uprightly, for the time to come; this is the nature of true repentance, as to be humbled for sins past, so to resolve, through the strength of Christ, against sin for the time to come. And then, ~~and then~~ Again, We are to examine our selves concerning our charity and love to all, to consider wherein our love is defective, and whether we can be truly reconciled and at peace with all; whether we have no grudges, nor no envyings for private and particular offences against one or another, and that we are ready to go and seek peace and reconciliation with them that have offended us; we are to consider our Love with the weakness of it, wherein we are defective in it; these things are required of us before our coming to the Lords Table, in a way of preparation. Now, therefore, if you would act and exercise Faith, remember this Direction which Faith will put us upon, namely, to be diligent in the use of those means that are required of us in order to the right participation of it. And if we be not diligent to prepare according as the Rule doth require, we do not act in a way of Faith in it. ~~and then~~ Lastly, If we would exercise Faith in our participation of this Ordinance, then our Faith should be employed about the

Sacramental objects and actions before us; for this is the nature of Faith, to make a particular application of such things to our selves. Now then in the things about the Sacrament, and the actions in the Sacrament in this Ordinance, Faith is to be found acting and making a particular application; as for example, to help you a little, when we see the Bread and Wine set in order and readiness for the administration; now Faith should act this way, namely, that God the Father hath prepared a spiritual feast for me, and God hath invited me now to this marriage feast, as you know we read in *Matthew 22. 4. He sent out his servants, saying, tell them which are bidden, I have prepared my Dinner, my Oxen and my Fatlings &c.* Thus a Soul should act in a way of Faith, now God the Father hath called me to this great feast, I am unworthy that ever I should partake of it; and yet God the Father hath invited me, and called me, and hath shown me the preparation that he hath made, and these things God hath called me to, and invited me to, and hath prepared them for me; and O! the wonderful rich Grace of God towards me! And then again, when you see the elements prepared, the Bread and Wine before you, here now is occasion for your Faith to consider of the Love of God the Father, and the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, that God the Father should prepare Jesus Christ his own Son for me, set out by these elements; here is the infinite love of the Father to me, and

and here is the wonderful love of the Lord Jesus Christ to me, that hath prepared these things for me, that Jesus Christ should set out himself as Bread for me. Oh! the Love of the Father, and the Love of the Son that is held forth to me. And again, when we see how the Bread is sanctified, blessed and broken by him whom Christ doth appoint to do it according to his own Institution, saying, *Take, eat, this is my Body which was broken for you:* now Faith shoulld act as if Jesus Christ himself did speak to you from Heaver, saying, take, eat, *this is my Body broken for thee:* For Christ hath appointed and Ordained him to do it in his Name ; and doing it in his Name, and according to his Institution, it is all one as if Christ himself did it. Now then, Faith should act as if I did hear Christ speaking from Heaven to me, *This is my Body broken for you;* so also, when we see the Cup, or the element of Wine, and hear those words also pronounced, *This Cup is the New-Testament in my Blood, which was shed for many for the remission of Sins;* truly now, we should take these words as spoken from the Lord Jesus Christ himself to us; *this is my Blood shed for you for the remission of your Sins,* as if Christ himself did speak from Heaven to us. And so again, when we do eat the Bread and drink the Wine, take them down into our bodies according to Christs Institution, now our Faith should act particularly, Namely thus, in resting, and leaning, and relying upon Jesus Christ for acceptance in the sight

of God, and for remission of Sins, and for Salvation ; this acting of Faith is eating and drinking, Saies Christ in *John* 6. 56. *He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* And what is this eating the Flesh of Christ , and drinking the Blood of Christ , but acting and exercising of Faith in our eating and drinking the outward elements? So that when we eat and drink with our Bodies, we should act Faith with our Souls, and eat with our Souls, leaning and resting upon Jesus Christ for acceptance in the sight of God, for remission of Sins, and for peace with God, and for everlasting Life and Salvation ; this is eating and drinking by Faith, this is that which Faith doth. Now, if you would partake of this Ordinance in Faith, then, Brethren, particularly apply the Objects and actions of this Ordinance to your own Souls ; and thus now I have given you some few Directions about exercising of Faith in this Ordinance of the Lords Supper, without which, not only without the habit and grace of Faith, but without the exercise of Faith, you cannot partake worthily, you cannot partake so as to please God; for *without Faith it is impossible to please God*, even in this Ordinance.

I thought to have spent some time in speaking to another head, namely, how we should exercise Faith in our particular Callings, and occasions, and matters that concern this life; for we must act and exercise Faith in all, or else we do not please God in what we do, even

ven in our very outward occasions and business. I am unwilling to make another discourse upon this subject, and therefore I shall, if you please to give me leave, only give you four or five heads of things that might have been further inlarged upon by way of Direction, How to exercise Faith in our particular callings and several conditions that we may be in in this life; I will but name them, you may enlarge upon them in your own private Meditations. Briefly then,

1st. In the first place, Would we exercise Faith in our particular Callings, and Stations, and Relations, and condition that we are in, then be careful to eye the hand of God leading and bringing of you into this or that calling, condition and course of Life, that we may be able to say, as *Paul* did, *1 Cor. 1. 1.* *Paul, called to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ through the Will of God;* It was the Will of God that brought him into that state and course of life; so must we be able to say, or else we cannot act and exercise Faith in our particular Callings, Stations and Relations; we must be able to say that God hath led me into this, or that, or the other course of life, or into this and that change of Condition, Faith doth not lead a man to make haste, to be over hasty for any thing; I have a mind to such a thing, I have a strong fancy to it, and therefore I must enter into such a Calling, or enter into such a change of Condition; but Faith doth put a Soul upon this, Namely, to

be solicitous to understand the Mind of God; and therefore observe it, Faith will put a Soul upon earnestness and frequency in Prayer; to seek counsel of the Lord, whether this or that be according to his Will or no? and also to advise with Christians about it, that so he may understand the Mind, and Will, and Counsel of God about it: That is the first Rule.

Secondly, Another Rule is this; we should be careful to walk with God in that particular place, and station, and relation wherein God hath set us according to his Will, for otherwise we do not exercise Faith in it; and therefore when a man is led into such a Calling, such a way and course of life, it is not for him to act and walk according to the example of others, to make the practices of others his rule: No, but we must look what the Will of God is, and make that our Rule. As now, if a man or woman be brought into a change of condition, into a Married condition, it is not for that man to say, Well, I will carry it towards my Wife as she carry it to me; or for the woman to say, I will carry it to my Husband as he carry it to me; no, this is not a rule to walk by, the examples of others; but let us look to our own duty, what the Will of God is concerning a Wife or a Husband. Remember this is a Second rule, To walk in our particular calling, and station, and relation, according to the Will of God.

Thirdly, Another rule and direction is this, if you would act and exercise Faith in your particular

ticular callings, then be frequently looking up unto the Lord for his guidance, and help, and assistance in your occasions and business ; Let us look up frequently to the Lord, that he would guide us, and assist us, and help us, for we must have Strength, and Wisdom, and Spirit, and Grace from God day by day ; to walk with God in our places and stations ; we had need therefore be frequent in looking up unto the Lord for guidance, and assistance, and help in the places and stations wherein he hath set us. *And to encl. 249*

Fourthly, Look up to the Lord for pardon, through the righteousness of Christ, and the merits of his Death ; for the pardon of our failings and miscarriages in our callings, and places, and stations ; we had need to be frequently looking up for pardon, that God would pardon our miscarriages, and failings, and weaknesses in our places and stations, that we do not walk so according to the Will of God as we ought to do ; we had need look to the Grace and Blood of Christ to be pardoned. And then,

Fifthly and Lastly, This might also have been further spoken to, namely, to leave the Issue, and event, and success of our endeavours with the Lord, to leave all wholly with him, all our burthers and cares, leave them all with the Lord ; Let us be careful to do our Duty, and to walk with God according to his Will in our places and relations, and leave the event with the Lord. *Cast your burthen*

then upon the Lord; Psalm 35. 22. and he shall sustain you. And so the Apostle Peter; 1 Pet. 5. 7. Casting all your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you! So should you do; and thus walking in our particular Callings, and stations, and places, and relations; we shall come to exercise Faith, and thereby so walk as to please God. O! that now you have heard this point and truth opened; that for the future the Lord would help us to be careful to exercise Faith in all our Duties; in our praying; in our hearing, and in our partaking of the Lord's Table; and in our particular Callings and relations, otherwise we cannot please God; for the Apostle says here, *Without Faith it is impossible to please Him.* *Ille in regnissimam huius agnisi-
-tationem habet nos; etenim huius agnisi-
-tationis est quod dicitur in libro secundum Corin-
-thios. **This much for this Text, and this Time.***



